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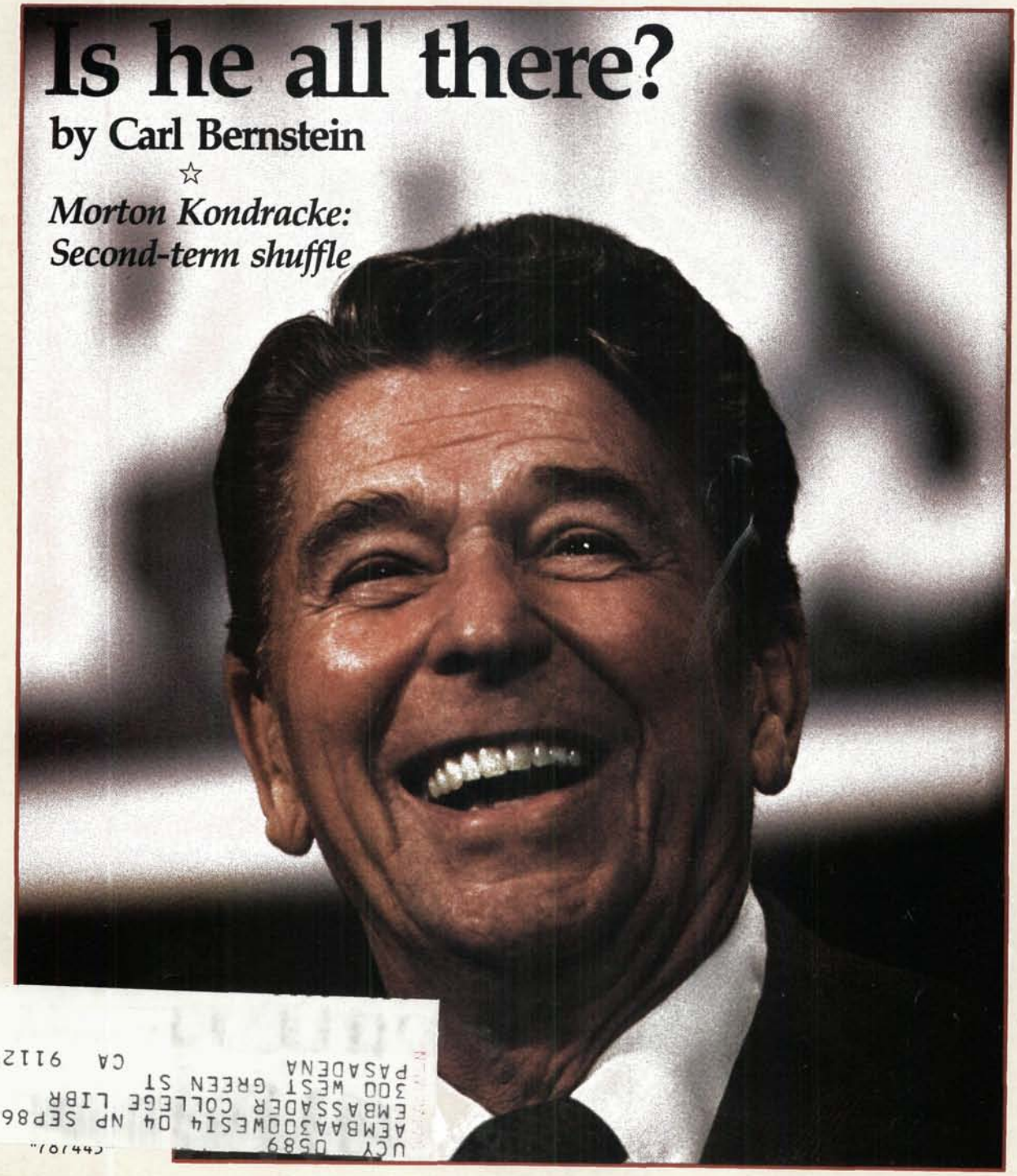
THE NEW REPUBLIC

Is he all there?

by Carl Bernstein

☆

Morton Kondracke: Second-term shuffle



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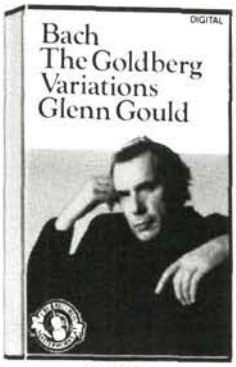

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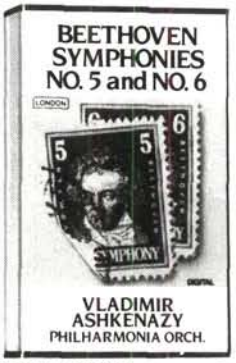

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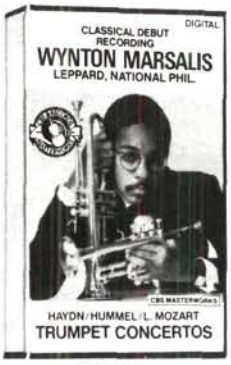

321851

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BACH

326983. Bach: Organ Masterpieces—*Toccata & Fugue in D Minor,* etc. Anthony Newman (Sine Qua Non)

171504. Switched-On Bach—Moog versions of *Air on a G String; Wachet Auf;* etc.—played by Wendy Carlos (Columbia)

319434. Bach: Sonatas for Viola De Gamba and Harpsichord—Yo-Yo Ma, cello; Ken Cooper, harpsichord *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

306464. Little Bach Book—Glenn Gould plays favorites from *French Suite;* many more (Columbia)

316216. Bach: Suite No. 2 for Flute; Telemann: Flute Suite in A Minor—J. Baker, A. Newman, Madeira Festival *(Digital*—Vox Cum Laude)

328054. Bach's Tops—*Gavotte; Sleepers Awake;* more. Kapp, Philharmonia Virtuosi of New York (CBS)

BEETHOVEN

273409. Beethoven: 3 Piano Sonatas—(Moonlight, Appassionata, Pathetique) Horowitz, piano (Columbia)

326918. Beethoven: Piano Sonatas No. 3 & 23 (Appassionata)—beautifully played. Andre-Michel Schub *(Digital*—Vox Cum Laude)

325340. Beethoven: "Hammerklavier" Sonata; 11 Bagatelles—Rudolf Serkin (Masterworks Portrait)

322362. Beethoven: Piano Trios No. 1 & 3—three virtuosi: Barenboim, DuPre, Zukerman (Vox Cum Laude)

315457. Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 (Eroica)—Szell, Cleveland Orch. (CBS Great Performances)

252874. Beethoven: Symphony No. 9 (Choral)—Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orch. (Columbia)

325654-395657. Beethoven: Piano Concertos No. 1 & 5 (Emperor)—Brendel, piano; Mehta and Boettcher, cond. (Counts as 2—Vox)

230425. Beethoven: Violin Concerto—Isaac Stern; Bernstein, New York Phil. (Columbia)

173674. Beethoven's Greatest Hits—*Ode to Joy; excerpt from Moonlight Sonata;* etc. Various artists (Columbia)

BRAHMS

307884. Brahms: Double Concerto—Zukerman, Harrell; Mehta, New York Philharmonic (Columbia)

328039. Brahms: Symphony No. 3; Haydn Variations—Mehta, New York Phil. (CBS Masterworks)

329110. Brahms/Schoenberg: Piano Quartet—a masterful transcription! Comissiona, Baltimore Sym. *(Digital*—Vox Cum Laude)

312439. Brahms: Liebeslieder Walzer; Neue Liebeslieder Walzer (complete)—L.A. Vocal Arts Ensemble *(Digital*—Nonesuch)

CHOPIN

246843. Chopin: Mazurkas, Etudes, etc.—Vladimir Horowitz, piano (Columbia)

306183. Chopin: Piano Concerto No. 1—Murray Perahia; Zubin Mehta and NY. Phil. (Columbia)

DEBUSSY

322826. Debussy: La Mer; Nocturnes—Michael Tilson Thomas, Philharmonia Orch. *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

328005. Debussy: Images (complete); **Estampes;** etc.—Ivan Moravec, pianist *(Digital*—Vox Cum Laude)

296830. Debussy: Quartet; Ravel: Quartet—Tokyo String Quartet (Columbia)

328401. Debussy: Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp; Syrinx for Solo Flute—plus works by Ravel, Faure, etc. Orpheus Trio *(Digital*—Vanguard Audiophile)

191874. Debussy's Greatest Hits—*Clair de lune, Reverie,* etc. Bernstein, Ormandy, etc. (Columbia)

GERSHWIN

318295. Gershwin Live!—Sarah Vaughan sings *The Man I Love,* etc. Thomas, Los Angeles Phil. (CBS)

321471. Gershwin: Piano Concerto in F; An American in Paris; Rhapsody in Blue—Andre Previn and the London Symphony (Angel)

HAYDN

326561. Haydn: 3 Favorite Concertos—Cello in D (Yo-Yo Ma); Violin in C (Cho-Liang Lin); Trumpet in E Flat (Wynton Marsalis (CBS Masterworks)

257956. Haydn: Symphonies No. 101 (Clock) and **No. 103** (Drum Roll)—Bernstein, New York Phil. (Columbia)

MAHLER

314369. Mahler: Symphony No. 1 (Titan)—Maazel, Orch. Nat'l de France (CBS Masterworks)

317685. Mahler: Symphony No. 4—Ameling; Previn, Pittsburgh Sym. (Angel)

325357. Mahler: Das Lied von der Erde—soloists, NY. Phil., Bruno Walter (Masterworks Portrait)

MOZART

294264. Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 21 (Elvira Madigan) and **No. 17**—Ashkenazy plays, conducts Philharmonia Orch. (London)

325365. Mozart: Eine Kleine Nachtmusik; Symph. No. 40—Casals, Marlboro (Masterworks Portrait)

318311. Mozart: Symphonies 36 (Linz) **38** (Prague)—Rampal, Mostly Mozart Orch. (CBS Masterworks)

314955. Mozart: Symphonies No. 40 & 41 (Jupiter)—Szell, Cleveland Orch. (CBS Great Performances)

326975. Mozart: Violin Concerto No. 4; Adagio; Rondos—Zukerman plays, conducts St. Paul Chamber Orch. (CBS Masterworks)

SCHUBERT

322487. Schubert: "Death and the Maiden"; "Quartettsatz"—Tokyo String Quartet *(Digital*—Vox Cum Laude)

317677. Schubert: Symphony No. 8 (Unfinished). **Rosamunde Overture and Ballet Music**—von Karajan, Berlin Philharmonic (Angel)

321729. Schubert: The Impromptus, Op. 90 & 142—Murray Perahia, piano *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

325092. Schubert: Sonata in B Flat; etc.—Alicia de Larrocha *(Digital*—London)

320432. Schubert: String Quartets Nos. 12 & 13 (Quartettsatz)—Juilliard Quar. (CBS Masterworks)

TCHAIKOVSKY

312777. Tchaikovsky: Capriccio Italien; Rimsky-Korsakoff: Capriccio Espagnol; etc.—Bernstein (CBS Great Performances)

308874. Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No. 1—Gavrilov; Kitaenko cond. Moscow Radio/TV Sym. Orch. (Col./Melodiya)

231563. Tchaikovsky: Swan Lake and **Sleeping Beauty Ballet Suites**—Ormandy, Philadelphia Orchestra (Columbia)

329169. Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4—Lorin Maazel, Cleveland Orch. (CBS Masterworks)

245399. Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 (Pathetique)—Ormandy and Phila. Orch. (Columbia)

304352-394353. Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker (complete)—Andrew Davis, Toronto Symphony (Counts as 2—Columbia)

173666. Tchaikovsky's Greatest Hits—*Waltz Of The Flowers; 1812 Overture;* more. Bernstein, NY. Phil.; Ormandy, Phila. (Columbia)

293191. Tchaikovsky: Violin Concerto; Meditation—Stern; Rostropovich, National Sym. (Columbia)

BAROQUE

323543. Handel: Royal Fireworks Music; Oboe Concertos 1-3—Karl Munchinger, Stuttgart Chamber Orch. *(Digital*—London)

324087. Handel's Top Tunes—Richard Kapp and Philharmonia Virtuosi of NY! *Arioso, Largo,* etc. (CBS)

329615. Handel: Water Music—Malgorie, La Grande Ecurie & la Chambre du Roy *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

326595. Music For The Kings of France—harpsichord suites by Marchand and Couperin. Igor Kipnis (Nonesuch Silver Series)

316406. Pachelbel Canon & Other Baroque Favorites—Boyd Neel, Toronto Chamber Orch. *(Digital*—MMG)

324525. An Isaac Stern Vivaldi Gala: Concertos For 2 and 3 Violins; etc.—Stern, Zukerman, Perlman, others (CBS Masterworks)

MODERN

325274. Berg: Lulu Suite—also Schoenberg, Webern. Ormandy, Philadelphia Orch. (Masterworks Portrait)

263293. Bolling: Suite For Flute and Jazz Piano—Rampal, Bolling (Columbia)

240473. Copland: Appalachian Spring (complete)—Copland conducts London Symphony (Columbia)

309500. Copland: Rodeo; Billy The Kid—popular ballet scores played by Bernstein, New York Phil. (CBS Great Performances)

326439. Copland: Rodeo; Dance Symphony; El Salon Mexico; Fanfare for the Common Man—Dorati, Detroit Sym. *(Digital*—London)

329060. Falla: Nights In The Gardens Of Spain; Three-Cornered Hat (Suite No. 2); etc.—Osorio, piano; de la Fuente, Xalapa Sym. *(Digital*—Vox Cum Laude)

319004. Glass, Philip: The Photographer—"Some of his best music to date"—*Time* (CBS)

201665. Grofe: Grand Canyon Suite—Ormandy, Phila. Orch. (Columbia)

326272. Holst: The Planets—Bernstein, New York Phil. (CBS Great Performances)

326256. Ives: Symphony No. 4; Robert Browning Overture—Stokowski, *cond.* (Masterworks Portrait)

318246. Orff: Carmina Burana—Muti, Philharmonia Orch. & Chorus (Angel)

318691. Prokofiev: Love For Three Oranges Suite; Lt. Kije Suite—Thomas, L.A. Phil. (CBS Masterworks)

324533. Respighi: Feste Romane; Pines & Fountains Of Rome—Dutoit, Orch. de Montreal *(Digital*—London)

326223. Schoenberg: Pelleas & Melisande—Barenboim, Orch. de Paris (CBS Masterworks)

324046. Shostakovich: Cello Concerto No. 1; Kabalevsky: Cello Conc. No. 1—Yo-Yo Ma, cello; Ormandy, Philadelphia Orch. *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

281493. Stravinsky: Rite Of Spring. Zubin Mehta, NY. Phil. (Columbia)

326405. Stravinsky: The Firebird (complete ballet)—Dohnanyi, Vienna Philharmonic *(Digital*—London)

326322. Varese: Density; Ionisation; Integrales; etc.—Craft, Columbia Sym. (Masterworks Portrait)

ROMANTICS

325308. Berlioz: Lelio—Boulez conducts soloists, London Symphony & Chorus (Masterworks Portrait)

325282. Bruch: Violin Concerto; Lalo: Symphonie Espagnole—Francescatti; Mitropoulos, Schippers, cond. (Masterworks Portrait)

326454. Dvorak: Cello Concerto; Bruch: Kol Nidrei—Harrell; Ashkenazy, Philharmonia Orch. *(Digital*—London)

326926. Dvorak: Legends—Zinman, Rochester Phil. *(Digital*—Nonesuch)

325381. Grieg: Piano Concerto; Schumann: Piano Concerto—Leon Fleisher; Szell, Cleveland Orch. (Masterworks Portrait)

228684. Grieg: Peer Gynt Suites 1 and 2; Bizet: Carmen Suites—Leonard Bernstein and the New York Phil. (Columbia)

321190. Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsodies 1, 4, 6; Rakoczy March; etc.—Boskovsky, Phil. Hungarica (Angel)

305730. Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 (Italian); **Overtures**—Andre Previn, London Symphony (Angel)

309492. Mussorgsky: Pictures At An Exhibition; Night On Bald Mountain—Bernstein, New York Phil. *(CBS Great Performances)*

310698. Offenbach: Gaite Parisienne; Saint-Saens: Danse Macabre; Dukas: Sorcerer's Apprentice—Maazel, Orch. National de France (Columbia)

245043. Rachmaninoff: Piano Concertos No. 1 & 2—Ashkenazy; Previn, London Symphony (London)

176578. Rachmaninoff's Greatest Hits—*Vocalise; Piano Concerto No. 2; 3 Preludes;* etc. Various artists (Columbia)

318436. Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade—Svetlanov, London Symphony (Angel)

325100. Saint-Saens: Carnival of the Animals—also works by Debussy, Satie. Philip Jones Brass Ensemble *(Digital*—London)

300871. Saint-Saens: Piano Concerto No. 3; Africa; more—Entremont; Plasson, cond. (Columbia)

314260. Salieri: Sinfonia Veneziana; more—Pesko, cond. (CBS Masterworks)

234237. Schumann: Piano Concerto; Mendelssohn: Piano Concerto No. 1—Rudolf Serkin; Ormandy, Phila. Orch. (Columbia)

225888. Smetana: Moldau, Bartered Bride Overture, Dances; Dvorak: Carnival Overture—Bernstein, NY. Phil. (Columbia)

310870-390872. Johann Strauss' Greatest Waltzes Ormandy, Szell, Bernstein (Count as 2—Columbia)

320424. Richard Strauss: Ein Heldenleben—Dicterow, violin; Mehta, NY. Phil. *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

202796. Richard Strauss: Also Sprach Zarathustra—Bernstein, New York Philharmonic (Columbia)

326660. Suppe: Overtures—*Poet and Peasant; Light Cavalry;* etc.—Solti, Vienna Phil. (London/Jubilee)

326447. Verdi: Overtures—*La Forza del Destino; I Vespri Siciliana; Nabucco,* etc. Chailly, National Philharmonic *(Digital*—London)

321844-391847. Verdi: La Traviata—Original Motion Picture Soundtrack. Stars Domingo, Stratas (Counts as 2—Elektra)

323733. Wagner: Orchestral Music from "The Ring"—*Ride of the Valkyries,* etc. Mehta and New York Phil. *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

310086. Wagner: Overtures—*Flying Dutchman; Rienzi;* etc. Maazel, Philharmonia Orch. (Columbia)

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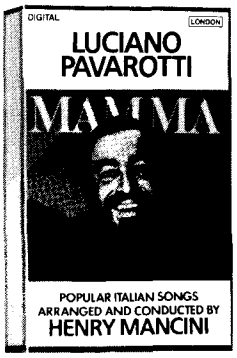

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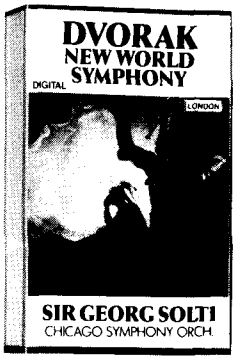

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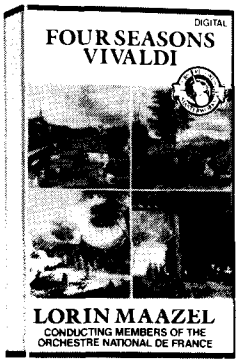

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325886. Liona Boyd—Live In Tokyo. Works by Dowland, Soler, Falla, etc. *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

305714. Canadian Brass—Royal Fanfare. Works by Bach, Joplin, Mendelssohn, Des Prez, etc. (Vanguard)

329128. Wendy Carlos' "Digital Moonscapes"—an exciting tour de force *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

203745. Horowitz Plays Rachmaninoff—*Sonata in B-Flat; Prelude G-Sharp; 3 Etudes-Tableaux* (Columbia)

327007. Patrick Gleeson's Computer Realization of Vivaldi's Four Seasons *(Digital*—Varese Sarabande)

328112. Lili Kraus Plays Bartok—*Hungarian Peasant Songs & Folksongs; Rondos; Sonatina;* etc. (Vanguard)

326413. Alicia de Larrocha Plays Granados—*Danzas Espanolas* (London)

313767. Ruth Laredo Plays Ravel—*La Valse, Miroirs,* etc. (CBS Masterworks)

326603. Ivan Moravec plays **Schumann & Brahms.** *Kinderszenen; Intermezzi;* more *(Digital*—Nonesuch)

280610. Jean-Pierre Rampal Greatest Hits—Debussy's *Girl With The Flaxen Hair;* Handel's *Largo;* etc. (Columbia)

319582. Jean-Pierre Rampal Plays Scott Joplin. *The Entertainer,* etc. (CBS)

329151. Renaissance Brass performing works by Byrd, Gibbons, Farnaby (Argo)

309237. Daniel Varsano—Erik Satie Piano Music. *Gymnopedies, Sonatine Bureaucratique,* etc. (Columbia)

319848. Andre Watts—Live in Tokyo. Works by Ravel, Brahms, Debussy, Haydn, etc *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

320895. Portrait of John Williams—*Theme from "The Deerhunter"; Fool On The Hill;* etc. (CBS Masterworks)

VOCAL AND ORCHESTRAL COLLECTIONS

292003-392001. Curtain Raisers—World's Favorite Overtures. *Die Fledermaus; Carmen; William Tell;* etc. (Counts as 2—Columbia)

329524. Peaches & Cream—Dances & Marches by John Philip Sousa. Erich Kunzel, Cincinnati Pops *(Digital*—Vox Cum Laude)

328856. Placido Domingo—Always In My Heart. Spanish songs by Lecuona; *Malaguena,* more (CBS)

311472. Placido Domingo With John Denver—Perhaps Love. Also: *Annie's Song; Yesterday;* etc. (CBS)

322347. Marilyn Horne—Live At La Scala. Music by Granados, Handel, Copland, etc. (CBS Masterworks)

326108. Mormon Tabernacle Choir—Faith Of Our Fathers. Traditional hymns *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

303453-393454. Pavarotti's Greatest Hits. Works by Bellini, Puccini, Verdi, etc. (Counts as 2—London)

326421. Leontyne Price Sings Verdi—arias from *Aida, Otello,* etc. (London)

321463. Beverly Sills and Andre Kostelanetz—Music of Victor Herbert. *Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life;* etc. (Angel)

326397. Sutherland/Horne/Pavarotti—Live From Lincoln Center. A truly grand program *(Digital*—London)

316570. The Tango Project—*La Cumparsita; Adios Muchachos,* etc. William Schimmel, accordion; etc. *(Digital*—Nonesuch)

324772. Kiri Te Kanawa—Songs of the Auvergne (by Canteloube). English Chamber Orch. *(Digital*—London)

320887. Kiri Te Kanawa—Verdi and Puccini Arias. Pritchard, London Phil. *(Digital*—CBS Masterworks)

329722. Wagner: Lohengrin (Highlights)—Peter Hofmann, tenor; Bayreuth Festival Orch. & Chorus (CBS Masterworks)

329136. Waverly Consort—Sephardic Songs; songs by Gombert, de Victoria, etc. (CBS Masterworks)

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CORRESPONDENCE

A NEW RACISM?

To the editors:
Charles Murray's attack ("Affirmative Racism," TNR, December 31) on recent affirmative action programs seems mainly based on his hunches. It also seems quite wrongheaded, as though his office might be in a particularly lofty and isolated ivory tower. Here are a few of my own hunches. First, affirmative action does not hurt our economy one whit and disturbs few people other than those who might have to wait longer for a promotion. The great majority of work in this country can be done extremely well by persons incapable of the highest scholastic scores. Take, for example, my profession: law. Even an average lawyer can write a superior brief if he or she takes the time and effort. Surely that is the case with most jobs and workers, including those favored by affirmative action. My second hunch is also utilitarian: blacks given preferential treatment are much more likely to move into my neighborhood. And integrated neighborhoods are still our best hope to remove racism in our schools and other institutions.

JAMES MCKENNA
Augusta, Maine

To the editors:
The articles by Glenn C. Loury ("A New American Dilemma," TNR, December 31) and Charles Murray were the best things I've read on this sad and vexing subject anywhere. TNR's continues to be the most provocative, intelligent, and courageous voice in the national debate.

MICHAEL MANDELBAUM
New York, New York

To the editors:
I am not black, but I am a member of a group that receives preferential treatment. In applying to private colleges I benefited from the lower standards required of applicants from small-town public high schools. I got into the University of Notre Dame, which does not pretend to have affirmative action for minorities. The result of the current nonpolicy is that Notre Dame has a startlingly low percentage of minority students. Of course, the one black in my dormitory of 250 students was, in Charles Murray's words, "fully competitive." Sadly, however, the intellectual atmosphere at Notre Dame was one of stagnant, lily-white homogeneity. The national creed of equality of opportunity was never challenged by a fellow student who knew a different world.

Fortunately, I again received preferential treatment, based on geographic origin, and was admitted to Harvard Law School. I attended in large part because of the diversity of race and perspective. The result of having black friends and intellectual colleagues here has been a new consciousness. It began at the most basic psychological level, as I learned to appreciate and feel comfortable in the company of people with whom I had no prior experience. I do not agree with all the opinions of my black friends and colleagues. Nevertheless, the most important and irreplaceable knowledge I have acquired at Harvard Law School has come from my dealings with minority students.

STEPHEN R. LEDOUX
Cambridge, Massachusetts

To the editors:
Charles Murray's observations on affirmative racism contain some elements of truth, but do not justify his dismay about preferential treatment for blacks. Wealthy, socially connected white males have always enjoyed preferential treatment in education and employment. Murray's piece reads just as well if one substitutes the term "wealthy white male" for "black" throughout the article. I support his bias against preferential treatment, but if it is to be abolished, abolish it for everybody.

MERLE BROBERG
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

To the editors:
Even if Charles Murray's hypotheticals are accurate, it is ridiculous to suggest that the college-to-corporation career path is a microcosm of the overall state of equal opportunity. Is Murray arguing that ". . . there is an abiding desire to be nonracist" in the hiring hall of a lily-white, father-son trade union as well as ". . . the typical corporation or admissions office?" Blacks are more likely to encounter the former than the latter. Yes, I'm familiar with anecdotes similar to some of those Murray discussed. I also know of a Teamster, who despite being one of only a handful of blacks in his local, was nevertheless resented by many of his co-workers for being a token. Perhaps Murray would explain this by arguing that whites on average are better forklift drivers than blacks, and that but for preferential treatment, the union would have no black members.

DORIAN R. WILLIAMS
Chicago, Illinois

To the editors:
Commendations on publishing the articles by Glenn C. Loury and Charles Murray. Perhaps we can now end the long period of silence when any white who has tried to deal with these problems gets called a racist and any black an Uncle Tom. Let us hope and let us try, for the cost of the silence has been enormous.

WILLIAM A. BAKER
New York, New York

To the editors:
As a black working woman, I was very disturbed by Charles Murray's article on affirmative action. It is impossible for me to know what whites are saying about black people among themselves. However, I do know that black people do not have the luxury of being mediocre. No matter what is said about "blacks not working out," the fact remains that blacks in the workplace have to be better than whites to be equal. No doubt certain features of affirmative action, especially of quotas, are inherently unfair. But Murray failed to build a convincing case for the existence of a "new racism." I don't think racism has changed much at all.

GINA L. HENDERSON
Washington, D.C.

To the editors:
Your recent article reaffirms my belief that blacks and other minorities must open their eyes to the ways of the world. I am the founder of the Happy Hairston Youth Foundation, which began 11 years ago. The primary purpose of the foundation is to provide youngsters from less fortunate economic backgrounds with educational opportunities. All of our youngsters attend the top private schools in greater Los Angeles. We accept no government money, we provide the transportation to the schools, we buy the children clothing,

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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FROM WASHINGTON

I've Got Five Dollars

Bernhard Goetz the subway vigilante, God's gift to columnists, is free while the law figures out what to do with him. As it happens, so were all four of his victims.

Darrel Cabey, age 19, the one who's now in a coma, was arrested October 13 for the first and only time, charged with holding up three people with a shotgun in an apartment vestibule. His case is awaiting trial.

Troy Canty, age 19, was first arrested in January 1982. Charged with criminal possession of stolen property, a felony, he pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor and was released without punishment. In April 1982 he was arrested again for possession of stolen property and got three years' probation. In March 1983 it was petty larcency and possession of burglar tools. He pleaded guilty and served 20 days. In December 1983 it was another 30 days for petty larceny. He has three outstanding summonses for mischief in the subways.

Barry Allen, age 19, was first arrested in 1982 for shooting someone in the hand with a BB gun. He pleaded guilty and got one year's probation. Later that year he pleaded guilty, with no punishment, for breaking into a video game machine. In April 1983 he was arrested for stealing $90 of quarters from a jukebox, pleaded guilty to larceny, and got a year's probation. During probation he ignored three summonses for "farebeating" (jumping the subway turnstile).

James Ramseur, age 18, has been arrested four times since 1982 for petty larceny and criminal trespass. He served two 60-day sentences in 1983 after pleading guilty to reduced charges of criminal mischief. He currently faces charges for minor subway offenses.

The official response to the wave of sympathy for Goetz was to put 1,350 additional city police officers in the subways. Judging from this record, though, the problem is not that troublemakers are not apprehended. These four kids have been caught 19 times! The problem seems to be that the criminal justice system is no deterrent whatsoever. Another noteworthy fact in this record is that although all four have been arrested, three have been convicted, and two even have gone to jail, none has ever actually had a trial.

These kids seem to regard their regular brushes with the law as a simple cost of doing business. So do their public-defender lawyers. "My guy never had crimes against individuals," said one lawyer indignantly. "He puts holes in video machines, not in people." The ritual such kids apparently use for mugging people on the subway could have been designed by lawyers, like a shady stock offering skirting the prohibitions of the Securities and Exchange Act. First they sit down a bit too close to you, then they ask for the time, then for a match, then for a cigarette, then for five dollars. By wittily exploiting people's innate racist fear of black teenage boys, they manage to communicate threat without overtly threatening. *The New York Times* quotes a prosecutor: "A request for $5 is not a crime."

If Bernhard Goetz had been as experienced with the law as these kids, he'd have had a much better chance of getting off, too. Under New York law, the prosecutor cannot get the testimony of Goetz's victims before the grand jury without giving them immunity for all crimes they mention. Their lawyers naturally would advise them to mention all pending crimes, as well as crimes as yet unknown to the authorities. So the prosecutor won't grant immunity and they won't testify. As a consequence, all he's got is Goetz's confession, an error of judgment no experienced participant in the dance of criminal justice would make.

The problem here is not the dedicated advocates who try to give their underclass clients the same chance to exploit the system as Claus von Bulow. The problem is the system. It doesn't guarantee a fair trial. It guarantees an unfair trial, in two senses. First, it supplies myriad opportunities for guilty people to avoid conviction. Some of these, such as the maze of rules about Miranda warnings, are designed to make the system lean over backward to avoid convicting the innocent. Others, like

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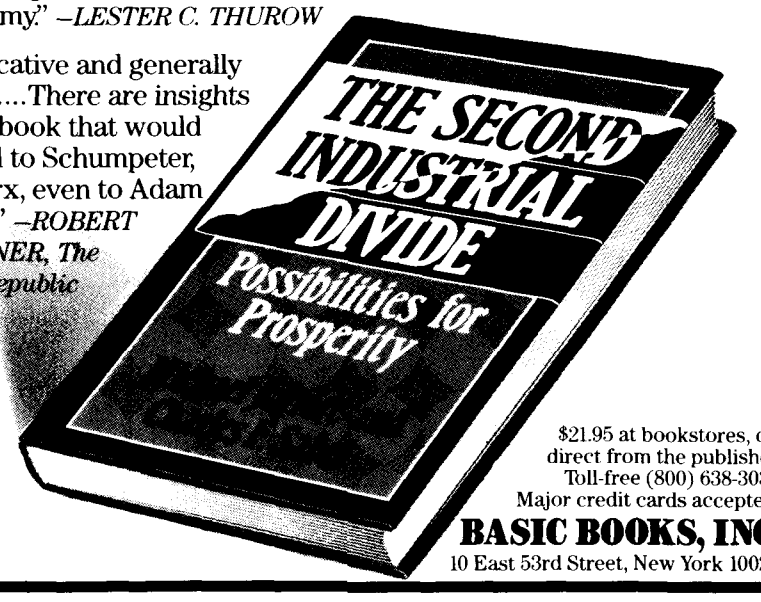

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
FEBRUARY 4, 1985

BERNHARD GOETZ'S GUN

The National Rifle Association has a new hero, and his name is Bernhard Goetz. In the weeks since Goetz shot four black youths who were allegedly harassing him in the New York City subway, the NRA has used the outpouring of emotional support for the "vigilante" as a vehicle for its goal of easing access to handguns. "Goetz has raised the consciousness of people that self-defense is a necessity," an NRA spokesman declared recently. But the real lesson of the subway shootings is the urgent need for federal handgun control. Goetz bought his gun in Florida after being denied a permit in New York, where tough local law prevails. It's easy to acquire a weapon in states like Florida, where the basic requirement for purchase is residency; Goetz, whose parents live there, has a Florida driver's license. If a system of federal control had been in place, Goetz could not have bought his weapon down South, and the whole sorry affair would not have occurred.

But wait. Wasn't Goetz simply acting in self-defense, protecting himself against punks whom the police and the courts seem unable to keep off the streets? A New York jury will ultimately have to answer the question, but details of the shootings that have emerged in the press so far make the defense of Goetz seem dubious. Goetz's antagonists did not actually brandish weapons. The sharpened screwdrivers they allegedly had in their possession were to be used to break into the coin boxes of video game machines, not to threaten robbery victims. And Goetz had no need to fire; when he pulled the pistol, his victims ran. Two were shot in the back, and one is in a coma and near death.

Still, Goetz's action may be understandable, given both the immediate circumstances and a past mugging. Not only was he approached in what seemed to be a threatening manner; he had been robbed and beaten several years ago. President Reagan made the point well in his last press conference: ". . . we may feel some understanding or sympathy for someone who was tested beyond his control, his ability to control himself. . . ." Almost anyone who owns a handgun is capable of losing control, and reflexively meting out the death penalty in a moment of fear or rage. Hence the results when we allow handguns for all: marital disputes, petty arguments, even minor traffic accidents turn into shootouts.

And yet, the cry is out to make handguns more readily available. Writing in *The Wall Street Journal*, Carol Ruth Silver and Don B. Kates Jr. claim that "citizens are right to believe that handguns have essentially the same defensive value for them as for the police." This absurd contention glosses over the fact that the police are trained to shoot, and even they miss on occasion. Barring mandatory combat pistol training for all handgun owners, duels between corporate executives and muggers would take numerous innocent lives. Even Goetz's marksmanship was not entirely accurate: a fifth shot, fired in the subway car filled with passengers, failed to hit its intended target. The specter of a society full of armed vigilantes is terrifying. If that's the path we choose, we may as well be

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honest about it: let's admit we're tearing up the social contract.

Granted, the social contract sometimes seems a bad bargain. There is a growing sense in major urban centers like New York that criminals are dictating their will to innocent abiders of the law. Overcrowded courts and jails and understaffed police forces are a perennial problem. So too is a criminal justice system whose built-in technicalities designed to safeguard civil rights sometimes ensure irrational results. One recent example is the Caroline Isenberg case, which proved to be a tragically suitable opening act for the Goetz drama. The lawyer for Emmanuel Torres, her confessed murderer, is arguing that his client's admission of guilt should be thrown out by the courts because it was elicited without a lawyer present; Torres was already being investigated for an unrelated crime in the Bronx, and the police were thus required to question him with a legal counsel in attendance, in addition to reading him his rights, which they did. If Torres escapes punishment on this detail, the self-defense lobby will possess another potent argument with which to make its case.

But the system is not the only culprit. There is also an escalating climate of paranoia in many major cities which sometimes exaggerates the reality of crime, and may even help to produce a Bernhard Goetz. Contrary to the popular impression, crime is down in the New York subway, and the city ranks only tenth nationally in violent crime. Yet people remain scared; perception often lags behind change. In Manhattan, the squalor of the subway—long, poorly lit, and graffiti-filled tunnels—adds little to one's sense of security. In Boston this point was dramatized last year: an effort to attack crime in the public transportation system produced some dramatically improved statistics, but people continued to be afraid for their safety in the subway, saying that the decrepit condition of the system was much to blame.

HANDGUNS, THOUGH, will not solve any of these problems; rather, they will add another one to the list. This year, more than 10,000 Americans will be killed by criminals with handguns. (This does include people killed by acquaintances or family members.) If the law makes it harder to acquire a weapon, that number will drop dramatically. The history of state and city handgun control legislation makes the case. A 1975 Massachusetts law required licensing to carry a handgun in public and established a mandatory jail sentence for noncompliance. Now handgun murders in the state are down nearly 50 percent and armed robbery has dropped over 35 percent, according to the lobbying group Handgun Control, Inc. Similar results have occurred in Chicago, which passed its law in 1981.

But even the toughest local laws are undermined by the lack of federal regulation. Washington, D.C., has among the most stringent handgun restrictions in the nation, but that did not prevent John Hinckley Jr. from going to Texas to buy the gun that shot President Reagan. The black market sale of handguns is big business: an enterprising individual can buy guns in bulk in a permissive state and sell them where the laws are stricter. Because penalties for breaking the law constitute no certain deterrent to crime, threats to punish unlicensed owners are not always effective. That is why it is essential to make the purchase of weapons more difficult.

The fate of two bills now before Congress will help determine the role of handguns in our society. The Handgun Crime Control Bill, sponsored by Senator Edward M. Kennedy and Representative Peter Rodino, is a long-overdue, responsible piece of legislation. It calls for a 21-day waiting period and background check before a handgun is sold; a mandatory jail sentence for anyone using a handgun while committing a federal crime; a limit of two handgun purchases per year, per person as a deterrent to black marketeers; and a ban on the construction, import, or sale of the so-called "Saturday Night Special," a handgun with a barrel length of three inches or less (like the ones used to shoot Reagan, John Lennon, and Robert Kennedy). It would also request, but not mandate, that each state establish licensing procedures for the ownership of a handgun. The bill places no restrictions on owning hunting rifles or shotguns, and does not ban target pistols.

The McClure-Volkmer Gun Decontrol Bill, on the other hand, is an NRA-backed bit of lunacy that seeks to reinstate mail-order gun sales, banned since 1968 after Lee Harvey Oswald shot John Kennedy with a mail-order rifle. The bill would also allow anyone to buy and sell handguns across state lines, eliminating record-keeping requirements which help the police trace handguns used in crime. The only rationale for owning a handgun is self-defense; these weapons serve no other legitimate purpose. We hope that Congress will learn from the Goetz case. Handguns for all is a stupid and dangerous cause.

TAKING RADIO LIBERTIES

Is America broadcasting anti-Semitism to the Soviet Union? Incredibly, the answer may be yes. Last August 19, Radio Liberty, a U.S.-run news and information station serving the Soviet people, broadcast a literary analysis of a passage from Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *August 1914*. In the passage, Solzhenitsyn recounted the 1911 assassination of Piotr Stolypin, Czar Nicholas II's prime minister, by Dmitri Bogrev, a Jewish anarchist. The announcers described Bogrev as a "cosmopolitan," with "nothing Russian either in his blood or his character" and "a degenerate of homeless radicalism." They contrasted Bogrev—a "serpent" with "vulgar," Satanic qualities—to Stolypin, a "Slavic knight." They said that Bogrev's act was "a shot at

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the Russian nation itself," and that it set in motion events leading to the Bolshevik Revolution. And finally, they quoted a passage from the Protocols of the Elders of Zion which likened the Jews to a serpent that "devours" other peoples.

This bizarre "analysis" was startlingly evocative of the anti-Semitic tradition of Pan-Slavism, which historically has depicted Jews as an alien race bent on the destruction of Holy Russia and the Slavic race. "Cosmopolitan" and "degenerate of homeless radicalism" are cliches of this tradition, as is the implication that Jews are to blame for Bolshevism. The snake may be the anti-Semite's most time-honored symbol. Not even official Soviet anti-Semitic propaganda has gone as far as quoting the Protocols of the Elders of Zion.

There has been at least one other, similar anti-Semitic broadcast by Radio Liberty. And the station has provided a platform for other eccentric Pan-Slavic views. In December 1982, for example, Radio Liberty broadcast—without critical comment—a speech by Solzhenitsyn in which he called Western democracy "democracy bordering on chaos, on state treason, on the right to freely destroy one's own country."

The problem seems to be that Radio Liberty has fallen under the influence of Russian émigré zealots whose views are not exactly those of the United States. In 1982 the Reagan administration appointed an émigré named George Bailey (a close associate of Solzhenitsyn's) as Radio Liberty's director. In the name of promoting "creativity" among émigré broadcasters, he all but dismantled RL's strict procedures for controlling broadcast content, and got rid of American supervisors who monitored RL broadcast editors. He also installed a group of Russian émigré broadcasters who share Solzhenitsyn's particular Russian nationalist views. To be sure, this ideology is anti-Communist. But it also glorifies Czarist Russia and regards both Bolshevism and parliamentary democracy as equally decadent "Western" ideologies with no place in Russian society. And it has historically contained a strong element of anti-Semitism.

James Buckley, the former New York Senator who is now President of Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty, insists that Russian nationalism is but one of many ways of looking at Russian society, and that RL shouldn't restrict itself to just one view. And he insists that steps have been taken to deal with errant broadcasts.

The General Accounting Office is currently investigating the goings-on at Radio Liberty. We hope GAO recommends at least a partial return to the procedures the Reagan administration has abandoned in the name of a more enthusiastic anticommunism. Of course Radio Liberty should vigorously condemn the Soviet system. But there are anti-Communists and anti-Communists. Russian nationalists who condemn Western democracy actually echo Soviet propaganda. It's not clear that the Reaganites who run Radio Liberty really understand distinctions like this. They seem to think that if you've seen one anti-Communist, you've seen them all.

SQUEAKY GREEK AT THE WHEEL

Greek Premier Andreas Papandreou entered Greek politics during the turbulent period depicted in Costa-Gavras's classic film Z, and his pronouncements today recall one of its memorable lines: "Always blame the Americans. Even when you're wrong, you're right." Papandreou has called the Soviet Union "a force against imperialism and capitalism," and has argued that "the USSR cannot be called an imperialist power like the United States." He recently traveled to Warsaw to embrace a man who expresses similar views on Soviet imperialism—General Jaruzelski. While he was there, he called Solidarity a "dangerous movement." In an interview with "60 Minutes" broadcast on January 6, he even suggested that the short-lived union, "for reasons that are suspect, pushed Poland against the wall." Without consulting his NATO partners, Papandreou has asked Rumania and Bulgaria to join him in creating a Nuclear Free Zone in the Balkans. He describes the activities of the PLO as a "holy struggle," and blames the shooting down of KAL-007 on the United States.

But surprisingly, Papandreou's anti-Americanism seems to be all talk. The 1981 election platform of his Socialist Party called for the immediate removal of American bases from Greece, and Greece's eventual withdrawal from NATO. Instead, after dallying for two years, Papandreou signed an agreement with the United States preserving the status quo for another five years. And, perhaps with a glance toward Turkey, he seems to have cooled his ardor for unilateral Greek disarmament. His negotiations with Rumania and Bulgaria are expected to lead nowhere.

In short, Papandreou, who lived for 20 years in the United States, earned a PhD from Harvard, married an American, and became a U.S. citizen, is a hypocrite. He repeats the comfortable catechism of anti-Americanism while doing nothing to harm Greece's ties with the United States. His rhetorical displays of independence please the young, viscerally anti-American militants in his party, while his actual moderation prevents the majority of the Greek population from turning against him.

We are tempted to applaud hypocrisy of this sort. Papandreou's pronouncements have few practical consequences, and allow the United States to retain access to the Aegean. He is preferable to someone who takes his party's platform more literally. The trouble with hypocrites is that they have a way of talking themselves into a corner. Papandreou has committed himself to everything from the removal of American bases to the recovery of the Elgin Marbles from the British Museum. Someday he may find himself committed to a move that he had no real desire to make. For example, the recent Greek-American arrangement calls for a final decision on the removal of American bases in 1988. If Papandreou wins reelection later this year, he might find himself

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forced to take a dangerous step which would not only damage America's strategic interests in the Mediterranean, but also would leave Greece vulnerable to Turkish aggression. Even if Papandreou believed everything he says, he would not want that. The best solution for him is to risk the displeasure of some of his supporters, and stop talking like a candidate for admission to the Warsaw Pact.

NOTEBOOK

□ NEOREALISTS NEED NOT APPLY. An ad placed in the January 10 *New York Times* invites "all 'impressionist' artists to participate in a contest of a poster which depicts the savage and vicious crimes committed by the Khomeini regime against the Iraqi POWs held in Iran, and resulted in the tens being killed and the hundreds wounded." The artwork must measure 100 centimeters by 70 centimeters, but "[t]he colors are of the artist's choice." First prize is $8,000. For impressionists in need of inspiration, "more details about the crimes of the Khomeini regime" are available at (202) 483-7500.

□ EAT THIS PAGE. "A magazine page containing dehydrated foods in plastic bags was patented this week by Penny Stone Cooper of New York and Richard L. Miller of Dix Hills, L.I. . . . According to patent 4,492,306, the page has two layers, and samples of almost any food can be inserted between them in a pouch formation. . . . Mrs. Cooper says the idea of the invention came to her in a dream."—*The New York Times*, January 12.

□ INTERFAITH BROTHERHOOD DEPARTMENT: "I confirm that indeed the Jewish people have been discriminated upon and persecuted in all centuries," the counselor to the Royal Court of Saudi Arabia, Dr. Maarouf al Dawalibi, declared at a United Nations human rights conference in Geneva last December. Dr. al Dawalibi continued: "Why is it so? What is common between Hitler and Nebuchadnezzar? . . . Why did Nebuchadnezzar scatter [the Jews] and Hitler try to exterminate them? Why sir? Let them examine themselves for the answer. It is because they call themselves the chosen people." Dr. al Dawalibi went on to recount one of the hoariest of all libels against the Jews—that in 1840 Jewish elders in Damascus cut the throats of a Christian doctor and his servant and drained their blood. Dr. al Dawalibi explained: "The Talmud says that 'if a Jew does not drink every year the blood of a non-Jewish man, then he will be damned for eternity.' " According to al Dawalibi, the Talmud also says that "the whole world is the property of Israel and the wealth, the blood and the souls of the non-Israelis . . . are theirs." He said, "This, Mr. Chairman, this belief is the reason which has caused discrimination and oppression against the Jews." The stated purpose of the conference was: "Encouragement of Understanding, Tolerance and Respect in Matters Relating to the Freedom of Religion or Belief."

□ RIGHT TOO SOON. Michael Weiskopf of *The Washington Post* has written a splendid and shocking series of articles about the use of infanticide as a method of birth control in China. If you follow academic controversies, you may recall that this was exactly the accusation that got a young Stanford anthropologist named Stephen Mosher in so much trouble a couple of years ago. Senior members of his profession were alarmed about giving offense to the Chinese, and Mosher found his career in ruins. As is so often the case, this matter seems to have gone from beyond credibility to beyond controversy without an intervening period when Mosher could enjoy his vindication.

□ FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "The armed uprising against Huey P. Long's dictatorship in Louisiana, predicted for some time, took place last week in Baton Rouge. Five hundred National Guardsmen called out by Huey's rubber-stamp flunkey, Governor O. K. Allen, met 100 members of the Square Deal Association on the field of the Baton Rouge airport. The Square Dealers, armed with shotguns and rifles, barricaded themselves behind a line of automobiles; the Guardsmen, with machine guns, began crawling toward them. The stage was all set for a miniature civil war when the Square Dealers, apparently afraid to endanger the lives of the women and children who had come out to see the battle, surrendered. Whereupon the Guardsmen, showing their usual self-control, layed down a barrage of tear gas against the crowd." (The Editors, "This Week," February 6, 1935)

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

SECOND-TERM SHUFFLE

AFTER NEARLY 20 years and four smashing electoral victories, two in the nation's biggest state and two in the whole United States, Ronald Reagan continues to be underestimated by both friends and enemies. The latest case of near-universal deprecation surrounds the job switch between White House Chief of Staff James Baker and Treasury Secretary Donald Regan. On *The Washington Post*'s Op-Ed page for January 11, Visigoth conservatives Evans and Novak declared the swap "bizarre and poorly conceived," and added, "this reconstruction by accident is testimony to the president's shortcomings as head of government." Directly below on the same page, Richard Cohen, the urban-contemporary liberal, wondered whether Reagan would even have noticed the change had not outgoing Deputy Chief of Staff Michael Deaver informed him of what Regan and Baker had arranged be-

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tween themselves. Reagan, Cohen wrote, "delegates to a fare-thee-well, and you would think it would matter greatly to him who his chief of staff happens to be." Even *Time*, America's weekly booster, superciliously jibed that the White House was working with "no blueprint, no grand design . . . as if by whimsy." The "casual way" Baker and Regan switched, *Time* said, "says much about the President's loose hand on the White House throttle."

Well, there's a point here. Since the well-being of the country, even the survival of the world, depends on the president's being compos, the citizenry would like constant assurance that he's super-compos, a strategic planner, a master tactician, a prince. Reagan often doesn't give that assurance. Then, writers of history books, by discovering coherence and order in chaotic past administrations after the fact, incline the readers of history books to expect visible grand designs in the administration of the day. It's perfectly true: Ronald Reagan does not come off like Henry Kissinger or Niccolo Machiavelli, or even like Franklin Roosevelt or John F. Kennedy. He emphatically is not turning every switch in the executive branch control room.

And yet good things do happen in this administration—at least for the president and the 65 percent of the population that now approves his handling of his job, up even from the 59 percent support he got on election day. Also, many bad things do not happen. If Reagan, Teflon-coated, does not get the blame for disasters like Lebanon and the 1982 recession, neither does he get credit (at least among liberal intellectuals and journalists) for successes. At the moment, he is not getting credit for the resumption of arms talks in Geneva, for example, when it's apparently Reagan's Star Wars initiative that brought the Soviets back to the bargaining table. It's also not widely appreciated that by advocating a wildly expensive and scientifically implausible Astrodome-like protective shield over the whole United States, Reagan made it possible for even some liberal arms controllers to consider the possibility of building a more modest antimissile system to defend U.S. land-based missiles and thereby enhance nuclear deterrence. What's ahead in Geneva is renegotiation of the 1972 ABM treaty. Reagan's critics are cheering in gratitude that the United States and the USSR are talking at all, but they would be excoriating Reagan had he proposed in the beginning to scrap the ABM treaty, that treasured symbol of détente. This is a dumb President?

ON ANOTHER SCORE, Reagan is being accused of dropping the ball on budget deficits—when in fact he has shrewdly handed it off to Congress. Instead of formally submitting a budget that would be embarrassingly declared Dead On Arrival, Reagan has already commenced deficit-closing negotiations with Congress. Legislators can hoot a little when the red-ink document is formally presented February 4, but the fact is that the Reaganites have got both Houses used to the idea that painful cuts or freezes will have to be imposed on popular programs such as farm subsidies and the Small Business Administration, and maybe even Social Security. In a final settlement, Reagan will be forced to accept cuts in the defense budget and perhaps even tax increases as a last resort. Do you think he doesn't know it?

Instead of being cause for derision, the Case of the Baker-Regan Switch ought to be looked at like that of the Hound of the Baskervilles: what didn't happen is as important as what did. If Ronald Reagan were the empty-headed, out-of-touch ideologue of his caricaturists, the original 1981 White House chief of staff would not have been the shrewd and pragmatic James Baker, but Reagan's dependable California factotum, Edwin Meese. No one can be sure what that would have meant, but Baker and his aides, including especially Richard Darman (now slated to be number two at Treasury), conceived and negotiated most of the specific legislative programs that made Reagan's first term a success. Meese gave the administration such albatrosses as tax exemptions for racially discriminatory schools and the delay in endorsing extension of the Voting Rights Act.

THIS YEAR, similarly, the dog that did not bark was the transfer of ideologue Interior Secretary William Clark to the chief of staff's job or the elevation of Michael Deaver, who's a genius at public relations and political showmanship but admits to nearly total disinterest in substantive policy. Hard-line conservatives in the administration, including Meese, Clark, CIA Director William Casey, and Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, put on a months-long campaign to get Clark into Baker's job. After the election, Reagan halted it with the simple comment that he was well pleased with Baker. That led to Clark's decision to return to the "children and grandchildren, horses and dogs" at his ranch in California.

After Clark was out of the way, Regan and Baker worked out their job switch and took it to Reagan. Baker, worn out and almost white-haired at age 54 after four years as chief of staff, wanted a top cabinet job. Regan, who'd performed creditably as treasury secretary, wanted to run the White House. Reagan said yes, rejuvenating both men for work on the trials of the second term. Maybe he should have thought up the idea himself, but what difference does it make?

The simple fact is that, whether by conscious design or blind instinct, Reagan has put able people into important posts in his administration, and most of the incompetents, firebreathers, and misfits—former national security adviser Richard Allen, former EPA administrator Anne Burford, former Secretary of State Alexander Haig, former Interior Secretary James Watt—are gone. If you think it's not so, ask leaders of the national conservative movement what's been going on. "We've lost," said one of them the other day in despair. "The White House has been taken over completely by *them*," meaning the terrible, compromising pragma-

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tists. Actually, this comment was made before the Regan-Baker switch, which is pleasing to the right because it gets Baker out of the White House. But the facts remain, Baker has moved just down the street to Treasury, Donald Regan is no Moral Majoritarian, and the rightists are out. There will be no crusade to "defund the left," no big push for an antiabortion constitutional amendment, no invasion of Nicaragua, no renunciation of arms control. The best-kept secret of this administration—at least as far as committed conservatives and liberals are concerned—is that Ronald Reagan may believe in conservative dogma, but he governs as a moderate pragmatist, just as he did in California. The "real Reagan" is the one we've got, and Donald Regan isn't going to change that.

Regan will make changes at the White House. He's got to: the old Baker-Deaver-Meese troika is breaking up, and three empires have to be melded into one. Regan, former boss of Merrill Lynch, is expected to run the White House as a CEO runs a corporation under a permissive chairman of the board. It's said that Regan and a handful of present or former Treasury aides are drawing up an organization chart. It will be submitted to Reagan for approval, and then slot-filling will commence. Washington is rife with rumors about who will get what, but most of them seem to have been generated by people promoting themselves. People who know Regan well say the final team will be "balanced" politically and that the new boss will not populate the West Wing with old Treasury or Wall Street subordinates. Where Baker was a low-key staff man—"the silent hand"—Regan is said to be open and talkative on the record. Regan is supposed to be more intellectually curious than Baker, who's said to value ideas for their problem-solving purposes rather than for themselves. There is some dispute about whether Regan can function up to Baker's standard as a political operator on Capitol Hill. Regan's admirers, including some in Congress, say he was quite adept at winning passage of Reagan's original three-year tax cut and the messy IMF bailout bill, and they say he earned vital chits with Republicans in Congress by making fund-raising speeches during the 1982 and 1984 campaigns.

Those who don't think Regan is Baker's equal as a legislative operator point out quite rightly that the administration's biggest legislative challenges—the budget and tax reform—are economic, and that Baker and Darman can as easily dicker with Congress from Treasury as from the White House. The bad news about the Baker-Darman move to Treasury is that the tax reform plan unveiled by Regan last December is likely to be altered to win business support—accelerated depreciation writeoffs and cut-rate taxes on capital gains are likely to be retained, for example—and become less equitable and growth-inducing, less truly "supply-side."

Even though Baker was an effective maneuverer on behalf of the President, he made one mistake that Regan ought to avoid if he can: becoming the target of incessant right-wing fury. In some ways this was inevitable; Baker became the target when Reagan disappointed conservatives who mistakenly believed he was one of them in body as well as soul. Baker also couldn't help favoring what he believed in—tax increases in 1982, for example—that the right detested. On the other hand, Baker and some of his subordinates unnecessarily went out of their way to offend the right simply by paying no attention to their concerns and stifling their ideas. Not all of their ideas were kooky, either. For example, the right-wing White House aide in charge of various constituency groups, Faith Ryan Whittlesey, created a briefing program and newsletter on Central America which provided as much solid information on Sandinista repression in Nicaragua and democratic progress in El Salvador as could be had anywhere else in government. Yet Baker's aides first blocked Whittlesey from furnishing her data to Congress or the press, and finally cut off the budget for her newsletter. A parallel hard-line information program at the State Department also has been starved of funds. In frustration and disappointment, Whittlesey is heading back to her former post as ambassador to Switzerland. If only to save himself from Baker's ordeal, Regan ought to find room for a conservative or neoconservative in the White House—U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, perhaps, or Civil Rights Commission Director Linda Chavez—so that the right feels represented. Pragmatists like Baker and Regan need have no fear that Ronald Reagan will turn into a flaming right winger just because one of them is bending his ear. After 20 years of saying one thing and doing another—and doing rather well at both—Reagan deserves a little credit from his friends. His enemies probably will never understand.

MORTON KONDRACKE

POSTCARD SHREVEPORT

SHOWER CAP TERROR

BECAUSE LOUISIANA is usually identified with its exotic southern half—the Creoles of New Orleans and the Cajuns of the southwest—people in the northern part of the state feel left out. Shreveport, where I worked for a year as a clerk for a federal court judge, is the capital of northern Louisiana. Southern Louisiana is lapsed Catholic while northern Louisiana is unlapsed Baptist. The hostility between north and south is so profound that the state has yet to build a major road between Shreveport and New Orleans, Louisiana's two largest cities. Though Shreveport is nearly equidistant between New Orleans and Dallas, it is a six-hour drive to New Orleans while the trip to Dallas takes half that time.

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port businessmen feel that Louisiana is sadly deficient in the work ethic. So each day Shreveport's businessmen gather at the corner of Edwards Street and Texas Street (Shreveport may be the only city in the country to name its main street after the neighboring state) and stare westward, waiting for the long arm of Dallas to pluck them from decadence. Each day they dress for the expected event: black shoes, gray suit, club tie—just like Dallas. At lunchtime, they eat at "Texas-style" restaurants and talk of their imminent departure for the land of plenty.

ONE DAY while walking by the corner of Texas and Edwards, I noticed that standing directly across the street from the usual crowd of white businessmen were four middle-aged black men wearing women's shower caps. They were otherwise conventionally dressed. These were those translucent plastic shower caps with the light blue tint and the little edge of ruffle poking out from beneath the plastic band.

During the next few weeks, the sight became common. People were wearing shower caps at concerts, bars, movies, and other places where crowds gather. I tried to find out why. People seemed hesitant to say.

The crowd at Newt's Po-Boy (all conventionally bareheaded) asserted that many Shreveporters, and particularly black Shreveporters, used a special "sauce" to moisturize their hair, and that this lotion could not be exposed to the air or the desired effect would be lost—something like a terrarium for the head. When asked what this liquid looked like, one of the fellows glanced around the room and pointed into his bowl of red beans and rice. What I saw in that bowl was the all-too-familiar ooze of red beans that had been left on Newt's stove well beyond their natural life. It was a purplish black and not a particularly pleasant purplish black at that. Even more disturbing was the thought that there were people in the community who believed that their fellow citizens were rubbing such "sauce" into their scalps. I dismissed the entire theory as having less to do with shower caps than with the long-term effects of eating at Newt's.

The owner of a local shoe repair shop was reluctant to voice his opinion, but in time was good enough to tell me the following story. Not long ago, the doctors at a local hospital declared that a rare and dangerous organism had been brought into the hospital on a visitor's scalp. So the doctors required all visitors, doctors, and nurses to wear shower caps. The shoe repairman speculated that once those at the hospital began to wear shower caps, a fashion set in.

With the exception of the shoe repairman, who thought that there was money to be made in shower caps, everyone found the whole matter pretty disturbing. The fact that people were unsettled by the shower caps, I believe, provided the answer to the mystery.

Shreveport, you see, is almost entirely controlled by a small group of men whose money comes from oil, timber, and other natural resources that are sold to the rest of the country. Because the wealth of these men is not dependent on the economic health of Shreveport, they have allowed the city to rot. Those members of the upper-middle class who are not in the natural resource business and who otherwise might have saved the city are too busy polishing their loafers in anticipation of the move to Dallas.

Both groups are ensconced in private clubs, where they eat and conduct business. White hostility toward the black population, which constitutes nearly 50 percent of the city, is apparent, if not overt. The rest of Shreveport is neglected and impotent. My theory is that several years back, certain members of the community (most of them black but joined by some whites) became frustrated with their inability to gain political power, and they set out to scourge the city. The method chosen was to adopt some form of dress or behavior that would subject the entire city to ridicule. Their strategy could not have been more effective. Just as your average Shreveport business leader is bragging to his wife and kids about the latest oil deal or beginning to think to himself that maybe one day Shreveport will be another Dallas, who should come walking down the street but a middle-aged man in a suit and shower cap. Terrorism of a most sophisticated kind.

One afternoon I was having drinks with a local accountant and I asked him why he thought men were wearing women's shower caps in Shreveport. Revulsion swept his face: "Shower caps. That's nothing. Last year they rode around in wheelchairs."

Editors' Note: This just in. A reporter at the *Shreveport Journal* tells us the shower caps are actually surgical scrub caps, considered stylish in the current vogue of baggy pants and other hospital garments.

MICHAEL RIPS

Michael Rips is a clerk for U.S. Supreme Court Justice William Brennan Jr.

The case for racial preferences.

ADMITTING SUCCESS

FOR 15 YEARS, colleges and universities have sought to increase educational opportunities for minority students by admitting blacks (as well as Hispanics and Native Americans) with SAT scores lower than those of white applicants. In the December 31 issue of THE NEW REPUBLIC, Charles Murray criticizes this policy and accuses higher education of helping to foster a new racism. In his view, preferential admissions practices, and affirmative action programs by employers, only demoralize blacks by forcing them to compete beyond their abilities while fostering stereotypes among whites that blacks really are inferior.

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Murray offers a simple solution to this problem. Treat all applicants equally in admissions (and hiring), and allow them to make their way without any discrimination or preference on grounds of race. The immediate consequence, he admits, will be a severe drop in the number of black students, especially at more selective colleges and universities. Eventually, however, blacks will participate fully and successfully in American life just as other initially disadvantaged ethnic groups have done.

Murray's arguments are not new. Even so, they may gain a wider following at a time when the nation seems to be reassessing many of its priorities and practices. University administrators need to take the criticisms seriously rather than ignore them in the hope that they will disappear.

Murray mentions only the disappointments and failures of preferential admissions without recognizing its many successes. Since his conclusions are subjective and not based on data, it is also hard to know what to make of his assertions about the effects of preferential admissions on white and black attitudes. For what it's worth, his impressions do not accord with the anonymous survey results at the one institution I know. In a Harvard poll of 1,200 undergraduates conducted in 1978, many students said they suspected that "others" might question the ability of blacks. But less than five percent of black undergraduates felt they had moderate to severe doubts about their own academic ability, and over 75 percent reported no doubts whatsoever. Almost 60 percent of white undergraduates believed that they had no such doubts about blacks, and barely 10 percent indicated moderate or severe doubts.

HISTORICAL EVIDENCE also cuts against Murray's proposals. In 1965 most colleges and universities outside the South were following the policy that Murray advocates now; they neither discriminated against black applicants nor gave them any preference. And what were the results? A full century after the Civil War, only two percent of the nation's doctors and under two percent of the lawyers were black. Although *Brown* v. *Board of Education* had been decided more than a decade earlier, the proportions of black students preparing for the major professions were still abysmally low. Only slightly more than one percent of the nation's law students were black, and a mere handful of blacks attended the predominantly white graduate schools of medicine and business. Little or no progress had been made in raising these proportions over the preceding generation.

Murray professes a desire to help blacks by warding off a new racism hardly less vicious than the old. If so, he should explain in detail just how his policies would work and why they would fare any better now than they did prior to 1965. It is surely not enough merely to draw an analogy to the experience of other ethnic groups with backgrounds and problems that differ markedly from the legacy of slavery and discrimination that black people have had to overcome. Years of experience with this model yielded little or no progress for blacks and engendered prejudices and resentments just as severe as any that have accompanied affirmative action.

Murray may respond that 1985 is not 1965, and that blacks would now apply and be admitted to universities in much larger numbers than they were 20 years ago. If this is his argument, he should recognize that the very policies he deplores played a major role in encouraging more blacks to seek a college and professional education after 1965. Since he is ultimately concerned with the feelings, attitudes, and stereotypes that result from current admissions practices, he should also explain how universities could suddenly (by his own figures) reduce black enrollments to 1.5 percent or less in scores of selective colleges and professional schools without a devastating effect on the morale and aspirations of blacks—not to mention a strengthening of racial stereotypes on the part of many whites.

I do not mean to overlook the resentments that can arise on the part of whites who feel unjustly excluded from the school of their choice. These disappointments are real, although I wonder why there are not similar resentments against other groups of favored applicants, such as athletes and alumni offspring. I also do not condone everything that has been done in the name of preferential admissions. Some schools have undoubtedly reached too far by admitting blacks with all but insurmountable academic handicaps. Some black students have failed to apply themselves sufficiently, and others have been too quick to reject efforts to help them academically as racist and insulting. Many universities have not been persistent or imaginative enough in developing special ways of assisting blacks and others needing help to overcome deficiencies in their academic backgrounds.

NOTWITHSTANDING these defects, most universities have had clear reasons for seeking to admit black students in significant numbers—better reasons, I believe, than those Murray advances to oppose preferential admissions. In the first place, admissions officers do not feel that high scores on SATs and other standardized tests confer a moral entitlement to admission, since such tests are only modestly correlated with subsequent academic success and give no reliable indication of achievement in later life. Instead, they believe that it is educationally enriching for blacks and whites, and important for the country as a whole, for students of all races to live and study together. Academic officials also feel that blacks will have unusual opportunities to contribute to our society in the coming generation and that higher education can play a useful role by helping them to make the most of these possibilities. Finally, educators believe that the growing numbers of black doctors, lawyers, businessmen, and other professionals will serve as examples to encourage more black youths to set higher educational and career goals for themselves.

In adopting these policies, universities have taken the long view. Academic achievement and persistence depend in some significant part on the parents' education,

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income, and occupation. A promising long-term strategy for helping overcome the racial handicaps of the past is to do what we can to increase the number of blacks with an education, income, and occupational background that will not only serve their own interests, but also help to instill higher educational aspirations and achievement in their children. The hoped-for results may not be fully realized for several decades, and there will be plenty of disappointments along the way. But no one should ever have supposed that we could solve in a single generation problems that were the bitter fruit of so many years of oppression and discrimination.

In the end, the vital question is not whether preferential admission is a success after 15 years, but whether it has made more progress toward overcoming the legacy of discrimination than other strategies that universities might have pursued. On that crucial point, Murray is not convincing. The policies he advances did not work in the past, and he offers no arguments and advances no data to suggest why they would work today. Instead, he gives us his pessimistic impressions of the current situation and compares them unfavorably with his hope of what might occur in some distant, unspecified future if we but followed his prescription. In the face of such arguments, universities should stick by their conviction that a judicious concern for race in admitting students will eventually help to lift the arbitrary burdens that have hampered blacks in striving to achieve their goals in our society.

DEREK BOK

Derek Bok is the president of Harvard University.

Can Cap win again? Stay tuned.

DEFENSE BUDGET GAMES

AS BUDGET SEASON approaches, Caspar Weinberger looks like he's cornered. The Democrats in the House showed that they're especially serious this year about cutting the defense budget when they ousted the elderly, compliant Melvin Price as chairman of the Armed Services Committee and replaced him with Les Aspin. In the Senate, John Tower, a total Pentagon loyalist, gave up his seat, and the new Armed Services chairman, Barry Goldwater, has been sending budget-cutting signals for weeks. The deficit estimates keep growing. Twenty-two Republican Senators have to run for reelection in 1986 and greatly fear a recession. The new majority leader of the Senate, Bob Dole, and the new White House chief of staff, Donald Regan, both have said often, and publicly, that they think the defense budget is too high. Defense spending is even dropping in the public-opinion polls.

On the other hand, the secretary of defense looked cornered in December, too. While he was in Europe at a NATO meeting, Budget Director David Stockman artfully set the stage for President Reagan to agree to three years of defense cuts that he had drawn up. Everybody supported these; they were a cinch. But Weinberger flew back and met with Reagan. He produced an easel-sized blowup of the Constitution with the beginning of Section 2, Article II, highlighted: "The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States. . . ." There's nothing in there about welfare, Mr. President, Cap is supposed to have said. And once again, against all odds, he brought Reagan around.

THE DEFENSE BUDGET is best understood these days as an abstraction, a self-referential document. Militarily, the difference between the highest possible budget and the lowest possible budget this year is practically nil. Those who want a larger budget base their case on the alleged symbolic and diplomatic gains to be had from an increased commitment of resources to the Pentagon. The case against major cuts (or, more accurately, a more modest increase) is not that we will be denied this or that critical program, but that we would be giving the appearance of weakness and undercutting our bargaining position with the Soviets.

The Pentagon, by its own estimates, has taken huge cuts in its budget requests since 1981. Its cumulative total is $148.9 billion. But it hasn't had to cancel a single major weapons program, cut forces, or even slow the production lines very much. The Pentagon asserts that it had already "cut" its fiscal 1986 budget by $35.9 billion, before the budget was presented to Congress. How can so much money disappear without more visible effects? At least part of the answer is that the Pentagon's budget is deliberately padded with "cut insurance." Every bureaucracy does this, but the Pentagon has perfected the art.

In December, for example, after his victory over Stockman, Weinberger agreed to cut the 1986 Pentagon budget by $11.1 billion in budget authority and $8.7 billion in outlays. But in his triumphal press conference, Weinberger said that "programmatic reductions"—that is, actual cuts—would amount to only $2.5 billion. The rest came from reducing the budget's fattened estimates of inflation and fuel costs to the level of reality (an annual Pentagon ploy), taking into account the pay cut for civilian federal employees that Reagan plans to propose, and taking part of the generous military pay raise out of the 1986 budget and putting it into a "supplemental appropriation" for fiscal 1985. In other words, accounting tricks.

Except in the unlikely event of a budget freeze, Congress will probably deny Weinberger another $5 billion or so, with similarly negligible real effects. It's hard for Congress to cut the defense budget substantially, and even harder to cut it intelligently, because there are such strong political constituencies involved. The most outrageous fat

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in the defense budget is unnecessary military bases, but Congress can never cut these because every one of them is in somebody's district. More broadly, half of the defense budget goes to personnel, meaning voters, and another third goes for procurement, which creates jobs and keeps politically powerful defense contractors happy. So Congress has a strong incentive to go after spare parts, training, and maintenance or to stretch out procurement programs, which is more expensive in the long run. Over the last few elections, even the general idea of cutting defense to reduce the deficit has played poorly with the voters.

In moments of candor, military people will acknowledge that they're playing this game with the budget. But they insist that it's necessary. As they see it, the defense budget is everybody else's favorite target. In November and December, Stockman was trying to cut it. In February and March and April, the congressional budget committees—and probably this year the armed services committees, too—will try to cut it. In September and October the appropriations committees take their whack. The Eastern establishment press never stops trying. The military is a separate culture, set in the middle of liberal Washington and on isolated bases around the world, still deeply embittered by Vietnam. The annual budget quarrel becomes a symbolic battle for military people, in which they are determined to protect the highest possible number, never mind what it's for. They are convinced that Stockman and Congress will cut just as much from a budget that's not padded as they'll cut from one that is. To ask merely for what they need, they're convinced, would be almost unpatriotic, since it would result in their getting too little.

The game has gone on for years. But now the amount of money involved is on a whole new order of magnitude (just like the federal deficit, not coincidentally). The Pentagon's budget in fiscal 1980, the last pure Carter year, was $142.6 billion. Its fiscal 1986 budget request is $313.7 billion. And this is peacetime.

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Within days after he took office in January 1981, with no previous experience in military matters, Weinberger decided to ask for $32 billion more for defense. He almost certainly didn't know at that moment how the money would be spent, and instructed the services to come up with programs that would cost that much. Reagan approved that increase and subsequent ones without knowing what they were for, either. Because the spending followed bureaucratic agendas rather than a thought-out strategy, we don't have important new capabilities. We're still short of spare parts and what's called "sustainability," meaning the ability to fight for more than a few days without running short. We still can't meet all of our commitments. The Soviets are still way ahead of us in ICBMs, tanks, attack submarines, and most of the other specific comparisons that helped scare us into increasing our defense spending so much.

It's often said in defense of Weinberger's budgets that we're devoting much less of our resources to defense than we did in the fifties, and also less than President Carter planned to spend. It's true that 30 years ago we were spending nine percent of the gross national product on defense, and now it's about 6.5 percent. But in real dollars, we're spending more today. The share of GNP has gone down because today's GNP is much larger. We're also spending a lower percentage of the federal budget on defense now than we did then; that's because the federal budgets of the 1950s didn't include vast new social-welfare responsibilities such as Medicare, food stamps, and a much more generous Social Security program. The comparison to what Carter allegedly would have spent comes from a meaningless five-year plan he submitted five days before leaving office in 1981, when he was smarting over Reagan's accusations that he was a weakling. Anyway, these arguments are exactly the kind of busy-but-briefed executive's "talking points" that, though they float in pure thin air, have come to dominate the way people think about defense.

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One reason Weinberger gets his way with the defense budget is simply that this is what Reagan wants, so the objections of others in the executive branch don't matter. Another is that he plays to the weaknesses of Congress: its fondness for the pork barrel, its limited attention span. But part of the blame must go to intellectuals and the press. Supporters and critics alike tend to write about defense in the way that Weinberger and Reagan think about it—either you have more of it, or you have less. (One notable exception is Edward Luttwak's excellent new book, *The Pentagon and the Art of War*.) Too many conservatives these days are content to believe that a higher budget makes us stronger, no matter how it's spent, and too many liberals are content to believe that all weapons are wasteful. It's difficult to learn about defense, in part because the Pentagon uses mumbo-jumbo to keep the civilians at arm's length. As a result, the subject tends to be discussed more than any other issue purely in terms of one's natural prejudice. As long as that's so, defense spending will rise and fall with little connection to defense needs.

NICHOLAS LEMANN

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Who wants to be Democratic chairman?

THE LITTLEST CAMPAIGN

FORMER GOVERNOR Scott Matheson of Utah was receptive to pleas that he run for Democratic national chairman, but not enough to pack his bags and move to Washington, D.C. Leave Utah for that? No way, he said. Governor Charles Robb of Virginia, who lives in the Virginia suburbs of Washington and wouldn't have to move, wasn't tempted at all. He insisted that identification with the national Democratic Party would destroy his political future in Virginia (he may challenge Republican Senator Paul Trible in 1988). Representative James Jones of Oklahoma, fresh from winning reelection against a strong Reagan tide in Tulsa, said he might take the chairman's job, but only if he could moonlight as a House member. That would have required a change in the party rule forbidding a part-time chairman, and would have meant a major fight. Jones quickly backed off. Then there was Neil Goldschmidt, who served as Jimmy Carter's transportation secretary and is now an executive of the Nike shoe company in Oregon. Your party needs you, a desperate band of moderate Democratic governors told him. Weighing life in Portland and his prospects for being elected governor in 1986 against the fun of feuding with Jesse Jackson and scheduling gay/lesbian caucus meetings, his decision was easy. Sorry, guys, find another pigeon.

Getting the idea that no one wants to be national chairman, are you? Well, that's not quite the case. There are now six full-fledged candidates for the job (one having made an early departure), and they are treating the chairman's fight like a race for the Democratic presidential nomination. Although practically no one outside the political junkie community (which includes the press) is paying any attention, this is business of the most serious kind for the initiates. "There's a 377-member universe and some of these people have $250,000 advertising campaigns," says Mark A. Siegel, a Washington consultant and one of the 377 Democratic National Committee members who will elect the chairman in February. "They think they are running in the New Hampshire primary." At least four of the candidates have what amount to boiler-room operations in Washington, with teams of munchkins tracking by phone and rumor how DNC members are leaning. Two are using direct mail, which is extraordinary, given so tiny an electorate. Four of them are pursuing a southern strategy, just as Senator John Glenn did in the 1984 presidential primaries. Moreover, all seven crave endorsements as avidly as Edmund Muskie did when he sought the presidency in 1972.

ACTUALLY, Muskie might pile up a lot of endorsements if he were running for chairman. But anyone with national stature or anyone whose prospects of winning a major office in the near future are bright doesn't want the job. And for good reason. "Look at Goldschmidt's situation," explains Greg Schneiders, a political consultant who encouraged the moderate governors to find a top-flight candidate for chairman. "Goldschmidt would have had opposition for the job, he's making money, he can spend time with his family, he likes where he lives, and has a chance of being governor. Somebody might give that up for a sure-fire office, but not to be Democratic chairman, where the odds are against your succeeding. Who needs it?"

The answer is Terry Sanford, Paul Kirk, Nancy Pelosi, Robert Keefe, John Cavanaugh, and Sharon Pratt Dixon. These are the announced candidates, a field of functionaries, none a major player in the party. Sanford is the only one with even the suggestion of a national reputation. He is the president of Duke University and was once governor of North Carolina. And he has been associated with three of the most spectacularly unsuccessful presidential campaigns in recent memory, his own in 1972 and 1976 and Senator Fritz Hollings's last year. His handlers claim that all this gives Sanford a national identity.

The governors (among others, Robb, Matheson, Bruce Babbit of Arizona, plus Representative Richard Gephardt of Missouri) weren't buying the Sanford hype when they conducted their national dragnet for a properly credentialed chairman last November and December. They were looking for a prominent moderate, preferably on the young side, from the Sun Belt or West who was available

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for full-time duty. Sanford qualified on the geography and ideology criteria, but he failed on age (he's 67) and fame. The governors backed no one, and Sanford wrote to his allies in injured tones, "I do not think we can redeem the situation." He implied that the only way he would agree to run was if 15 to 20 governors and "at least 25 state chairmen" would endorse him. They haven't. In mid-January Sanford became a candidate anyway.

In the scheme of things, Sanford's entry was a piddling event, but you couldn't have proved that by the impact it had on the race. Duane Garrett withdrew and threw in with Sanford. Allies of Kirk, the Democratic Party's treasurer and the putative front-runner for chairman, moaned that his momentum had been halted. Pelosi, formerly the state chairman in California, boasted that she was now assured of making "the runoff" (the final vote for chairman by the DNC after the field has been whittled to two). Keefe, a Washington lobbyist who was executive director of the party in the early 1970s, said that his southern strategy had been stymied. He had been angling for a breakthrough among the quarter of the committee members from the South, many of whom plan to vote in a bloc. Sanford's claim on that bloc is stronger than Keefe's, or Kirk's, or Pelosi's.

In terms of sheer professionalism, Pelosi is the leader. She bills herself as an "outsider," which is odd since she comes from one of Maryland's most political families (her father and brother were mayors of Baltimore) and has held two national party posts herself. Her campaign office is located in a fancy Washington high-rise across the street from Brooks Brothers. The direct-mail firm she's hired, Teresa Sullivan Associates in Virginia, pumps out thousands of mailgrams and letters. One from Willie Brown, the California Assembly speaker, said: "Right now, there is nothing our Party needs more than the kind of leadership Nancy Pelosi can provide." Pelosi has recruited an associate of media consultant Jerry Rafshoon for full-time work, is getting help from a Washington operative of New York adman David Ogilvie, and employs Bebe Smith, a respected political p.r. consultant. Smith recently set up a breakfast session with political reporters for Pelosi at the Sheraton Carlton Hotel near the White House. Smith and two assistants greeted reporters at the door, gave them name tags and packets of press releases, and even offered to hang up their coats. But Pelosi's breakfast was outclassed by Duane Garrett's press luncheon at Il Giardino, a frightfully expensive Washington restaurant. Garrett, a wealthy lawyer from San Francisco who raised millions for Walter Mondale, could afford it. Garrett drew 20 reporters, and Pelosi only ten.

THE ISSUES in the chairman's race are money, caucuses, and the creation of a new policy council—as if the party needs nothing more than a little fine-tuning. Democrats were defeated in four of the last five presidential elections, lost the Senate, and drove so many voters to identify themselves as Republicans that Democrats aren't the majority party anymore. At best the party is suffering serious erosion, at worst it's on the wrong end of realignment. Yet the candidates for chairman largely agree that the problem is one of "perception"; somehow the voters have gotten the wrong idea about Democrats. With a briefer, a freshly packaged "message," and more money, all will be well. But "the message is one that is not in the head of the national chairman," says Pelosi. It's for a policy council to formulate. Of course, retiring chairman Charles Manatt formed precisely such a council when he took over in 1981, and it formulated nothing. But some dreams never die. Pelosi also stresses that she is "a very good fund-raiser" with "knowledge of state parties," and that she is "independent." Keefe would cashier the official caucuses of the national committee (black, Hispanic, gay/lesbian, etc.) to erase the party's special interest stain. Kirk has gone so far as to suggest a leader for a policy council, Matheson, who reciprocated the honor by endorsing Kirk for chairman.

At times Kirk, who was campaign manager for Teddy Kennedy's presidential bid in 1980, comes close to declaring that the party must veer to the right. He says, for example, that it must plug for "fiscal realism, economic growth and individual opportunity . . . [and] a strong defense." But he stops short of flatly advocating an ideological shift to adjust to the nation's conservative mood. Alone among the candidates, Dixon asserts bluntly that the party "must move to the center." Uprooting the caucuses and tinkering with party rules is "irrelevant," she says, mere rearranging of the chairs on the deck of the *Titanic*. Democrats should become the "party of capitalism." In the 1970s, "we moved away from any notion of growth and economic competition . . . that's simply not an acceptable view in this country today. And that's why we're losing elections."

Dixon, who is black and a vice president of Potomac Electric Power Company in Washington, concedes that her pitch disturbs some Democrats. "I've been asked by some of my staunch supporters to drop capitalism from my jargon. I couldn't imagine why it was offensive. I thought it was as American as apple pie. They told me it sounded exploitative." Dixon is forceful and attractive, but her predominantly black chunk of the balkanized electorate of Democratic committee members is small.

Kirk has support in the Northeast, Midwest, and West; Pelosi in California, Maryland, and a few scattered states; Sanford in the South. None is the "ideal party chairman," conceived by Garrett as "a former elected official of great stature, a political moderate, a non-Washington insider, and someone who will be a star on television . . . some magical cross between John F. Kennedy and Lloyd Bentsen. But let's face it, it is doubtful that there is a knight in shining armor out there who can rescue us from all that ails this party." Too true.

FRED BARNES

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Is he up to the job? Some surprising people raise doubts.

REAGAN AT REEL II

BY CARL BERNSTEIN

ALMOST FROM THE BEGINNING, the men who know Ronald Reagan best have raised—sotto voce, and sometimes unintentionally—deadly serious questions about the murky matters of the president's knowledge, competence, and ability. The hints have been there all along, scattered through many a tortured turn in the Reagan road: Lebanon, Central America, the budget, arms control, staff disarray, sleaze, killer trees, the Middle East, recallable nukes, Armageddon. Each incident is dutifully reported, although the conventions of journalism discourage reporters from taking on the competence question directly. Still, some who regularly cover Reagan are obviously dubious about the man's ability, and you can read their worry between the lines of their copy. ("He is neither especially acute nor especially driven," observed a *Newsweek* cover piece last summer, "neither especially knowledgeable nor especially well prepared for the most powerful job in the world.") Nor does the concern stop at the door of the White House press room. Questions have been raised in private by Howard Baker, Henry Kissinger, David Gergen, Alexander Haig, Robert Dole, Martin Feldstein, John Sears, David Stockman, Malcolm Baldrige, and Richard Nixon—among others.

In my periodic conversations with figures in the Reagan entourage over the past four years, the men who serve the president have generally taken a benign view of the matter. Often they have suggested that the presence near the helm of people like themselves—combined with the commonplace wisdom and inspirational skills of the Great Communicator—will keep the ship of state on course. Still, there have always been reservations in their words and their voices—casual admissions that the president is "ignorant" (the word crops up repeatedly); that his ideological rigidity leads to instinctive responses which, unchecked, might produce some kind of domestic or global "disaster" (another discouraging word frequently heard); and that his gift for the inaccurate anecdote reflects the real man and the mythology he subscribes to.

"Yes, it is true that he has real trouble with the job," one of Reagan's principal advisers (I will call him the Counselor here) said to me during the third year of the Reagan presidency. "But the staff has the responsibility to bring him people and ideas and the state of the art. He'll listen, absorb. All they have to know about Ronald Reagan are his beliefs and priorities." Unfortunately, the Counselor added quite recently, only Stuart Spencer, Michael Deaver, Nancy Reagan, and James A. Baker had mastered the process as Inaugural II dawned on our 73-year-old president.

Not without reason, Reagan's closest associates were pleased with the first reel of his administration. To a degree few of them had thought possible, he achieved what he set out to do. The national agenda is his, they tell you: America is at peace and our defense is reinvigorated; the tide of inflation has been stemmed; the American people feel good about themselves and their country; the return to "traditional values" has begun. Whatever his shortcomings, however unorthodox his methodology, the president, they say, deserves all the credit.

It follows that the White House should be a merry place these days. But it isn't. The euphoria of November's landslide has faded. The president is old. His staff is tired and leaving—for California, for less demanding jobs in the administration, for the cashier's window in the private sector. By all accounts there has been a lack of planning for the second term that would have been unthinkable in the flush days after the first Reagan victory.

Now, as the second reel begins, the problems of presidential competence that were a subplot of Reagan I seem more imposing. The administration's own safety net—the ideologically tattered but resilient White House dropcloth of Deaver-Baker-Edwin Meese-Richard Darman-et al—has been folded. At least for a time, the president will have to fend for himself more than he has been accustomed to. And in that light, the comments of his associates in our conversations during the first term—and their reevaluation on the eve of the second—seem more telling.

We were riding in a black, chauffeur-driven sedan. It was early in the '84 campaign, and one of the Reagan camp's premier strategists was talking about his biggest concern: protecting the president from himself. "Between now and the election," he confided, "I see my primary job as keeping him from committing troops in Central America. If he puts in troops we probably lose the election. If he doesn't we win—big. It's that simple." There was little doubt in this individual's mind that the president's instinct was to put troops there. It was the staff's job to keep them out—just as it has been the staff's responsibility to keep this president from uttering some of his private thoughts and acting on others.

After the election, one of the principal Reagan assistants of the first term (I will call him the Aide) offered this sketch of the president: "He's the Huck Finn of American politics.

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He's a man who operates almost 75 percent of the time on instincts—not facts or specific information. And they are very good instincts. He's not well read. He's ignorant in the classic sense. But he can grasp things easily. If you send him two or three pages of stuff he gets it. If you send him 30 pages he'll read it, but it's not like he gobbles up information. He's beyond that at this point in his life. He approaches things from a sense of beliefs about people and from the past. He doesn't read books. It's true that he's got more horses than books. He'd rather watch TV shows at night. . . . He has a sense of his times and enough good sense to be successful: as someone once said of FDR, he's got a first-rate temperament and a second-rate mind."

Clearly, rest and recreation serve Reagan—and the country—well. "When he's relaxing and taking it easy he thinks—especially about the big questions," the Counselor explains. "He'll come back from his horseback ride and call Kissinger on this or that, for instance. Or foreign leaders. He calls them a lot. And Mrs. Kirkpatrick." His needs are reflected in his scheduling. "At the end of the day, by 4:30 or so, he's not nearly so sharp," says the Aide. "So you don't overschedule. The presidency doesn't require a 12-hour day."

PHOTOGRAPH BY DENNIS BRACK/BLACK STAR

Who makes decisions in the Reagan White House? "Nobody and everybody," answers an assistant to the president. "Decisions tend to emerge—rather than be made—from a collegial atmosphere. When the president himself is deeply involved, his policy is to wait until the last minute to make up his mind—especially on the tough ones."

Often, say his aides, Reagan drifts into positions he didn't really intend—because he either didn't understand their implications or didn't explore the alternatives. Then someone—more often than not the congressional leadership, Jim Baker, Stockman, Darman, or the State Department professionals—has had to extricate him and the country from the messy consequences. Get him the right information, show him that there is no other way out, convince him that his back is to the wall—and the Marines finally come out of Lebanon, the Voting Rights Act is rescued, the national park system doesn't become a lumberyard.

One of the key Republican congressional figures through the last three Republican presidencies (the Leader, I will call him here) speaks of "constantly bailing the president out, because decisions are made without thinking them through. Some people down there [at the White House] ought to be thinking about what happens next . . . He gets in over his head."

A man who has served Reagan over many years (the Manager, he will be called) offers this explanation: "Here's a man who by his disciplines has always been handled. In Hollywood you get up at an unusual hour and go to some place and the sun comes over the horizon and somebody is there to check the lighting. Somebody else goes over your lines with you. Then you have a few words with the director. You sit where you are supposed to. Somebody says 'Action!' and you go with what you've got. . . . A great deal of his presidency relates to this exercise."

The complaint heard most frequently from those who deal regularly with the president is that, quite simply, he doesn't know enough—whether it's history ("Nikolai" Lenin), yesterday's papers (unemployment in South Succotash), or today's agenda (arms control). "The president is for arms control in theory, but when particular proposals are put on the table, Cap Weinberger and Richard Perle have the capability of dissuading him," says one observer who has seen it happen. "They are enormously influential in terms of particular proposals because of their detailed knowledge—which he lacks." But the Manager dismisses the concern about arms control. "It's all about bullshit. You've got to negotiate on faith. The intricacies are for others. Ronald Reagan is in better shape than anyone to get an arms control agreement because he's been so tough."

"It's true he doesn't know enough, and that not enough gets done because of it," says the Manager. "To someone like Richard Nixon this is a disaster. But it's not as disastrous as it looks on its face. The system hasn't broken down yet. . . . It's a consensus presidency and jockeying occurs to get to him and feed him ideas. He escapes blame because the people sense he isn't making all the decisions. He takes a small percentage of the agenda and leaves the rest to his cabinet, the staff, and the bureaucrats."

The Counselor makes an essential point about how the president chooses to work. "He's out of touch in terms of what usually lands on a president's desk. But hope, leadership, is what Ronald Reagan has. He's an optimist. That's his job. That's his strength as president. What you

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see is what you get. He says what he wants, even when he is dead wrong. But you can get him to moderate it. People sense that about him."

The Manager, too, glimpses a silk purse here. "Look at Lebanon: in the end, aren't you glad we got out? Isn't the country glad? Somebody else would have dug himself into a different hole. Everybody else [in the presidency] who walks down a crazy path can't turn around. All through his life Ronald Reagan has followed his own sense of things. You won't ever quite catch him. He's got a reasonableness. He has no personal hangups about himself. He doesn't meditate on history. Where others in the presidency have said 'I can't turn around because I'll look like a fool,' he does it. All the time."

THE CONGRESSIONAL LEADER is dubious. He is disturbed at the number of times colleagues have gone to the Oval Office to discuss pressing issues like the deficit or arms control, and have spent most of their time hearing the president discourse instead on sports, the movies, and his presidency of the Screen Actors Guild.

"They should have seen Shultz or McFarlane or Donald Regan," says the Manager. And the Counselor notes: "Ronald Reagan has always been removed to a degree. He wrestles with one or two things at a time, not the whole plate. He feels LBJ and Carter and Nixon tried to do too much. . . . His priorities are what he's involved in: the larger questions about defense and foreign policy and the economic program."

"A Nixon or a Kissinger can't believe anybody would sit there with all that power and wouldn't use it," says the Manager, who knows both men. "They assume he's dumb. He's not. What they perceive has to do with his disciplines, with the age he grew up in, and the way he's done things all his life. . . . Nixon can't accept the dimension of what we're talking about. He's wasted a lot of time trying to get specific points across to Reagan when he would have been better off getting to George Shultz."

Those surrounding this president dismiss a lot of the conventional worries about Ronald Reagan. "The wild stuff like killer trees and nuke 'em in five minutes—you can't take that stuff literally," says the Counselor. "The situation is like a couple of fellas sitting in your living room and talking wildly. It doesn't mean it's going to happen. *He'd be the last president to start a war.* The difference between the rhetoric and the actions is great. He sounds harsh. But he has a lot of compassion." And the Manager echoes, "All that concern about Reagan and war comes from people who just don't know him. It's a very fine quality. He just wouldn't do it." That view is universal among those who know him best.

The Nixon perception of Reagan is particularly relevant because so many members of the Reagan administration also served Nixon. They stay in touch with their old boss and respect his judgment. They are a little awed at their own power in this administration and recognize that it derives from Reagan's way of doing things—exactly the opposite of Nixon's way. Nixon would never have granted them such authority. For the most part they are not Reaganites, and they know that the Let-Reagan-Be-Reagan zealots are correct when they complain that the Reagan revolution has been abandoned to alien forces from the GOP mainstream—people who believe in nothing so much as accommodation with the traditional Washington political ethic. (More than anything, Watergate taught them that.) Reagan's way of doing business, especially his frequent abdication of decision-making, leaves many of the Nixonites uneasy. This too reflects Nixon's perceptions.

Throughout the Reagan presidency, Nixon has supplied the administration with a steady (and sometimes steadying) flow of counsel, most of it on foreign policy questions. It has been tough slogging. Though Nixon is said to believe that Ronald Reagan has gradually become committed to the *idea* of arms control, he is known to doubt that the president comprehends the need to dispense with some of his anti-Soviet baggage if the idea is to become a reality. And reality, in the Nixon view, has been in short supply when Ronald Reagan fixes his gaze upon the world. Or so the ex-president has told his acolytes in Washington. A president, in his view, must read and study. Nixon believes Reagan does neither; that his views of both America and the world are absurdly simplistic; and that he often makes "uninformed" judgments. There is another important component in Nixon's view of Reagan: recognition, touched with envy, that Reagan is by far the better politician—a master practitioner who almost effortlessly stirs pride and affection among his countrymen. Nixon tells visitors he agrees with the Reagan policies that genuinely reflect a tough, pragmatic negotiating position vis-à-vis the Soviets but that the basic Reagan approach has served primarily to scare hell out of the Russians and piss them off. (He hasn't lost his way with words.) The Reagan attitude toward the Soviets has been confusing, destructive, and dangerous (again, his reported words). In the Nixon analysis, Reagan's view of the Soviet Union as an evil empire is the starting point of his foreign policy ideas—before they are refined, given new shape, and left bulging with undigested gulps of Shultz, Weinberger, Kirkpatrick, McFarlane, and Kissinger.

REAGAN SEEMS to inspire double vision all around him, striking partisans and detractors alike with his wit (or lack of it); his work habits (or lack of them); his ideology (or lack of it). The only people who seem thoroughly comfortable with the apparent contradictions are the few who know him best and have worked with him most closely. They, like the Counselor or the Manager or the Aide, matter-of-factly discuss his strong points and weaknesses from an overall perspective of admiration and confidence—*as long as Reagan is served well.*

Just before taking office, Reagan sat down with one of the men he has been closest to in politics and told him, "I have all the confidence in the world." It was, says this man, "exactly the opposite of Sacramento, where he couldn't even find the shithouse door." That confidence

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has struck some in the cabinet and White House staff as exaggerated, masking critical presidential shortcomings—especially in foreign policy.

Alexander Haig complained loudly (too loudly, considering how quickly word got back to the president) that Reagan was so unread, so unskilled, and so wedded to primitive right-wing notions that the coherent conduct of foreign policy was impossible. Moreover, Haig complained, the president had surrounded himself with schemers of every stripe (Baker, Darman, Clark) who took advantage of Reagan's good nature ("He can't fire anyone," says the Counselor) and his capacity for indecision. This represented more than General Haig's characteristic lapses to aides about wobbly commanders in chief. Haig was the first to conclude that the president had embarked on a disastrous (his word) course in Nicaragua and El Salvador—and he said so, calling the Casey-Reagan approach (contras, covert funding, mining harbors, stopping up toilets in Managua) "Mickey Mouse." His solution, intended to appeal to what he regarded as the president's grander instincts, was to quarantine the whole seedy Sandinista crowd and then see how the Cubans and the Nicaraguans reacted. ("Let's go to the source," was the operative Haig-phrase of the moment.) But Ronald Reagan wasn't buying—more evidence to his champions that he would be the last to start a war. Since then Reagan has clung to the hope that the Sandinistas—Evil Empire, Southern Division—will fall if the CIA just keeps up the pressure, an outcome the CIA itself officially regards as impossible.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DENNIS BRACK/BLACK STAR

"Right now there is no overall agreement or strategy within the administration on Nicaragua, but it's my sense that the president wants to push it hard in the second term," says a presidential assistant who recently left the staff. Part of the reason for the uncertainty is that the president maintains correspondence, makes phone calls, and reads material that he doesn't share with the staff—not even with Baker or Deaver, according to aides. There is a general feeling that before reaching some decisions he dips deeply into his reservoir of right-wing friends and contacts from the old days. "He can be his own worst enemy, particularly when he gets some hare-brained ideas from reading right-wing garbage," says the Counselor. "A lot of times that's when the trouble starts." The staff has even gone so far as to try to keep Reagan's copy of *Human Events* from reaching the Oval Office in-box.

Ronald Reagan, says the Aide, is "perfectly happy throwing America's weight around if it's some little place like Grenada. But not the big ones. Not engaging the Russians." The question in this man's mind is how Central America fits into that scheme.

Even members of the Reagan inner circle have concluded reluctantly that the president never adequately understood or defined for himself and the country what we were doing in Lebanon. The initial purpose of the American military presence in Lebanon was to oversee the dispersal of the PLO. Then, after Bashir Gemayel was assassinated, the policy became providing a symbolic military presence behind the government of brother Amin Gemayel. Finally, as that government's authority shrank to the neighborhoods of West Beirut, America gradually seemed to become its guarantor.

"Nobody would believe the lack of thought that has gone into this," the congressional Leader told his chief administrative aide at the time. Day after day he and other Republican congressmen searched frantically for the right keys that would unlock Reagan's Lebanese box. This was the end of any real confidence the congressional Republican leadership—Bob Dole, Howard Baker, Robert Michel—had in Reagan's conduct of foreign affairs, according to aides of all three men. Officials at the Pentagon, the National Security Council, and the State Department were equally dismayed. Finally, under the kind of pressure that seldom converges on the Oval Office—the congressional leadership of both parties, the secretary of defense and Pentagon brass, key members of the White House staff, and the European allies—Reagan relented.

One key member of the White House staff saw Lebanon as part of a much larger problem, "our overall weakness in strategic planning." Later, he observed: "Lebanon was one of those occasions when lack of knowledge gets in the president's way and interferes with sound policy-making. Typically, in 90 percent of instances, it doesn't make any difference and the president's instincts overcome his lack of knowledge or the bureaucracy is there to catch something if it is dropped." But not in planning a political-military operation in which the three key players—Reagan, Shultz, and McFarlane—knew little about the

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part of the world they were dealing with, says this man. "Unlike Nixon or Carter, Ronald Reagan does not benefit from either his own strategic sense or strategic thinkers around him, like Kissinger or Brzezinski."

At least the Lebanon debacle is over. The deficit, by contrast, is still with us. No other issue has raised such sustained doubts about Reagan's leadership. On the White House staff and on Capitol Hill the response to the president's color blindness to red ink has, for three years, been to take the matter of spending out of his hands. The Leader once compared the process to taking money from a child because he can't be trusted with it. Now the president is confronted with the unprecedented spectacle of his own party submitting a "congressional budget" before he has a chance to send his own version to Capitol Hill. (Forget about problems of *bi*-partisanship here.)

Martin Feldstein was hardly the only one in the administration urging the president to face economic reality (again, that word). Baker, Stockman, Deaver, Baldrige, Darman, and not a few others exhausted themselves—broke their picks, as they say in the White House—in this particular battle for the president's mind. An official involved in every step of the budget process said, "The major frustration has been Reagan's continued naive belief that almost everything could be solved by economic growth and by eliminating fraud, waste, and abuse." FWA, some aides called it for short. To the added exasperation of his economic team, Reagan seized on the findings of the Grace Commission to buttress his notion that cheating and bad management underlay the government's budgetary ills. "After that, there was no dealing with him," says the same man.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DENNIS BRACK/BLACK STAR

Such attitudes—especially toward the Grace report—fit nicely with Reagan's notions about poverty in this society and how to deal with it. "He has his own views and prejudices and you can't shake them," says the Manager. "He is compassionate to a point; but there is a lot he is not aware of. To him poverty means what it was like when he was a boy—not the same kind of deprivation as exists today. He was able to move beyond poverty and he doesn't understand why people today can't move beyond it. The problem is that his model of the country doesn't exist anymore."

"His attitude," says the Counselor, "is, 'When we can make the whole economic system work, the poor are going to really have a chance.' He tends to be that way on most issues: solve the big problem and other elements will fall into place. Unfortunately there are a lot of poor people who can't wait." Meanwhile, Reagan simply refuses to accept the fact that poverty in America has worsened since he became president.

The economy's recovery has made the president even more confident about his course. "He has his own bizarre techniques and ploys," the Counselor continues. "He reaches his goals—and this includes the so-called social agenda—through a combination of style and ideology. His style is he knows where he wants to get. Then he rolls it around and lets others figure out the details of how to get there." The method applies particularly to economic matters. "He just doesn't accept the fundamental thesis of the economics profession: that economics are subject to immutable laws," explains the Aide. "The economists say he knows nothing about economics; that he doesn't view the situation with the kind of alarm he should. But he has no confidence in economists. He thinks good judgment and basic principles will take us further. Well, he's an optimist. So he moves in the direction he wants to move. I think he's brighter than they give him credit; and to a large extent, his way has worked."

The last point is particularly important in understanding the attitudes of Reagan's staff and his associates. However frustrated by their failure to move the president on this question or that, whatever their perceptions of his intellectual shortcomings, they believe in Ronald Reagan—fiercely. They sense something about the qualities of the man and his instincts and his skills that transcends the doubts. Each of them has his own way of putting it.

"It's mostly bureaucrats and economists and congressmen who say he doesn't know anything," says the Counselor. "He's such a different animal in terms of the way he operates. They're afraid of him on the Hill. They know he has this ungodly rapport with the American public. He knows he's got it, but I've never seen him abuse it."

"People think the president has to be smarter than everybody," says the Manager. "Sometimes it's a hindrance. A president chooses to do certain things. People at Harvard, Yale, and *The New York Times* have a view of

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what is necessary of a president that may not be realistic. Most presidents think they can do everything. In Reagan's case it's been better. He has no lack of self-respect, like Nixon. Jimmy Carter believed the job couldn't be done. Ronald Reagan believes it shouldn't be done."

"There is a tendency to underestimate him," says the Aide. "He doesn't speak with the same kind of sophistication as others on issues. But he has this raw intelligence and insight that has served him well. . . . People on the staff treat him like a national asset, a treasure. If he doesn't know something or understand something in a meeting, they back up, lay it out. There is no condescension. I've never heard his name taken in vain by the staff. He's revered—like Chairman Mao."

WHAT, THEN, of Reel II, in which a 73-year-old president who is at times remote, disengaged, and uninformed must now carry on without the team that protected him in Reel I? Many of the men who were around Ronald Reagan's White House for the first term are skeptical of the bullish optimism that has been coming from Donald Regan in recent days (and the attendant impression that the Oval Office is about to become one more branch office of Merrill Lynch). If anything, their underlying concerns about Reagan and his way of doing business have deepened during this time of transition. Their consistent theme had been that the whole of the Reagan presidency was infinitely greater than the sum of its parts—that Reagan's weaknesses didn't matter, because somehow it all worked. Now they're a little less certain. Those rusty parts are beginning to loom larger.

The Counselor sees dark meaning in the staff changes: "It's not indicative of what the president wanted to happen. Instead it was symptomatic of the interests of others being served. That's a new element in this administration."

"He's becoming more removed," says the Manager. "The interesting thing is that you can do something like the new staff changes without the president being the least bit involved. There's a sense of everything slowing down. After the '86 elections it's a caretaker job. He knows this year is the big year for the whole team, but he's not prepared."

"The staff has a hell of a problem on its hands," says the Aide. "It's unbelievable what's been left open. Certainly the president can't run these things. Donald Regan is a good manager; he'll get strong lieutenants. But it's going to be very tough. The president made a mistake by letting the situation drift the way it did. He sort of whistled along with a very sanguine view of things. He feels he'll get along. But a lot of other people are having doubts."

Insofar as an agenda exists for the second term, arms control ("correcting the balance of forces and then moving to reductions") is unquestionably near the top. Nancy Reagan and George Shultz have spent hours discussing the matter with the president. And with backing from Mrs. Reagan, the Shultz portfolio is being enlarged to include overall management of the American-Soviet relationship. But Reagan, his aides believe, still has a long way to go if he is to grasp enough of the substance of the subject to ensure that a meaningful arms agreement is not sabotaged by Perle and other administration hard-liners. Reagan's aides aren't sure he can do it.

"At this point he should be getting more involved in some things like arms control," says the Manager. "Still, nothing has suffered much at this moment from the situation. What matters is if people too far away in the world get the feeling that he is unengaged. That is dangerous."

Meanwhile Shultz—professorial by nature—is ready to undertake the tutelage of Ronald Reagan. "Shultz has felt all along that if he had an opportunity to spend time one-on-one with Ronald Reagan—or a combination of him and Bud McFarlane—that it would be beneficial in terms of policy," says one of the principal presidential assistants of the first term. "He felt what the president really needed was to build an understanding of the way the world is working. Nancy has strongly reinforced the idea, and Deaver has. It will happen—and arms control will be the priority, partly because any man in the presidency eventually begins thinking in those terms." An interesting legacy for someone who has spent half his life baiting and bashing the Russians.

TAX SIMPLIFICATION also seems high on everybody's list. The Counselor expects the president to endorse the concept—and get it enacted. Another legacy. "Only a Republican can get it," he observes. "LBJ couldn't. It's a very populist program. The Chamber [of Commerce] and others don't want it, but he'll buck 'em. Typical Reagan."

The rest of the domestic agenda (if one exists) and the question of whether the president will tackle the deficit with more than "Grace 'n' Growth" seem nowhere near decided. The Counselor foresees less activism here. "I expect he'll be more involved personally in foreign affairs and content himself with setting the tone on domestic matters."

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"When it comes down to it, what is it a president ought to do?" asks the Aide. "Our system does not demand we have computers in the presidency. He's there to give direction, get the country behind things, and serve as a ceremonial and executive head of government."

Nobody does it better, say those who have served Ronald Reagan. At least the first time around. They're not quite so sure about the second. □

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Future Tense

The first person in the world to read George Orwell's *1984* was his British publisher, Fredric Warburg. In the course of a long report on the manuscript to his colleagues, Warburg said: "*1984* . . . might well be described as a horror novel, and would make a horror film which . . . might secure all countries threatened by communism for 1,000 years to come." The film has now arrived. (A second version, actually. There was a reportedly lesser one in 1955.) Whether it will act as communism-insurance until 2985 I'm not quite qualified to say; but because the screen version was made with talent and understanding, it is, as Warburg meant it, a horror film, and it's sufficiently faithful to Orwell to raise again some of the questions that the book originally raised.

1984
(Atlantic Releasing Corp.)

When Diana Trilling reviewed the book on its American publication in 1949, she said:

> [It] is a brilliant and fascinating novel, but the nature of its fantasy is so final and relentless that I can recommend it only with a certain reservation. . . . One cannot help being thrown off, I think, by something in the book's temper, a fierceness of intention, which seems to violate the very principles that Mr. Orwell would wish to preserve in the world. . . . To make this criticism is not to ask for quietism as a means of combating the passions which are destroying modern life. But it is to wish that there were more of what E. M. Forster calls the "relaxed will" in at least those of us who, like Mr. Orwell, are so acutely aware of the threats of power.

My own, highly personal view of the "fierceness" that Mrs. Trilling notes is that a dying man—dying in his mid-40s—was indulging in vendetta. (Orwell survived the completion of his book by only 13 months, most of them in hospital.) Profoundly perceptive beyond question, he was nonetheless slashing some vengeance on the world for his disappointments in progressive politics, a vengeance very possibly further inflamed by bitterness at his personal fate. In fact he hit so hard at the dangers of social organization that he later had a qualm and issued a much-quoted statement:

> My recent novel is NOT intended as an attack on Socialism or on the British Labour Party (of which I am a supporter) but as a show-up of the perversions to which a centralised economy is liable and which has already been partly realized in Communism and Fascism. I do not believe that the kind of society I describe necessarily *will* arrive, but I believe (allowing of course for the fact that the book is a satire) that something resembling it *could* arrive.

This has always seemed to me an instance of fence-straddling in the career of a man passionate for truth. (How many of the book's millions of readers have thought of it as satire?) And indeed there is evidence of ambiguity in the novel itself. Several commentators have pointed out Orwell's curious attitude toward the proles in *1984*. The civil servants and bureaucrats, like the hero, Winston Smith, live under harsh rule and scrutiny. The proles, 85 percent of the population, are allowed relative freedom because the party thinks them subhuman. Orwell considers them a locus of hope, the "people who had never learned to think but who were storing up in their hearts and bellies and muscles the power that would one day overturn the world." Raymond Williams is quite right to label this as "stale revolutionary romanticism." Williams adds: ". . . if the tyranny of *1984* ever finally comes, one of the major elements of the ideological preparation will have been just this way of seeing 'the masses'. . . ."

The film concentrates on the bleakness of the supervised lives. Though some proles are visible, we get no hint of Orwell's (compensatory?) feelings about them. The filmmakers made their choice presumably because Orwell's ideas about the proles would be difficult to dramatize and are not the famous elements of the book; and because virtually all of the story, which is slim enough, concerns the supervised people.

Cinematically, it's clear that the producer, Simon Perry, the director, Michael Radford, and the cinematographer, Roger Deakins, began precisely where they ought to have begun: with the look of the film. They obviously wanted to fix the visual texture before they decided on anything else. What was evolved, with the aid of a laboratory, was a color film in which a gray-green tone predominates, cut through with exceptionally deep blacks—of shadow and of clothing. The result is an effect of combined dream and submersion, of underwater nightmare, lethargic but frightening. The few sequences in the countryside are shot in quite ordinary color, but by contrast they seem—as they must have seemed to Winston and Julia—gorgeous.

The settings by Allan Cameron, particularly the huge beehive offices, the eating rooms and meeting halls, are spare and austere, not slickly mechanized but bureaucratically grubby. The

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Beverly Hills Cop. Eddie Murphy, one of the three real black stars in all of U.S. film history, makes this trite story of a maverick detective sizzle. (Reviewed 12/31/84)

Mass Appeal. Middle-aged compromise vs. youthful idealism—this time a priest and a seminarian. Decently if not deeply written; acutely acted by Jack Lemmon and Željko Ivanek. (1/28/85)

A Passage to India. Forster's masterpiece is (to put it negatively) not dishonored by this screen version. Superb cast. Skillful adaptation, splendid editing and direction all by David Lean. (1/21/85)

Stranger than Paradise. Modestly made, immodestly confident in its ease and humor. Three young people float through contemporary America. (10/29/84)

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costumes by Emma Porteous suggest the robotistic without caricature. (It's never explained that the red sashes worn by young women are emblems of the Junior Anti-Sex League.)

Radford wrote his own screenplay, and if you concede his concentration on the story, with minimum reference to the proles and the ideological discussion, it's competent. Winston (had his parents named him for Churchill?) works as a reviser of back newspapers to conform prophecies to events. His life is swathed in big-screen surveillance, programmed hates, continuous war bulletins; yet he manages a journal of secret feelings. Julia, a fellow-employee in the Ministry of Truth, contrives to slip him a note containing the words "I love you," a surprise to him and a piercing moment to us. They meet several times, make love, and are caught—the apt word because eroticism is to be stamped out. O'Brien, the party official interrogating and torturing Winston, wants to make him betray Julia, to make him replace his love for Julia with love for Big Brother, the head of state. My one substantive criticism of the screenplay—as Radford has chosen to craft it—is that the ending is left slightly open. The last line of the novel is "He loved Big Brother," as Winston looks at the telescreen in a café. In the film Julia has just left; Winston turns, looking after her, and says, "I love you." He is sitting in front of B.B.'s immense face, but he is looking, more or less, after Julia. A small fudge.

THIS IS Radford's second feature film. Born in 1946, he was graduated from the British National Film School in 1974 and has made a number of documentaries. He both wrote and directed his first feature, *Another Time, Another Place*, also produced by Perry, which was released here last year. It was one more version of a conventional story, a POW and a local woman, this time an Italian assigned to a Scottish farm and the farmer's much younger wife—decently done but no kind of preparation for *1984*, which is filmmaking at a high imaginative level.

Suzanna Hamilton is Julia and has exactly the wiry, desperate sexuality that is needed. Lovely old Cyril Cusack is Charrington, and his loveliness helps the surprise of his duplicity. But it's the two leading men who set the final seal of quality on the film. John Hurt, principally remembered from *The Ele-*

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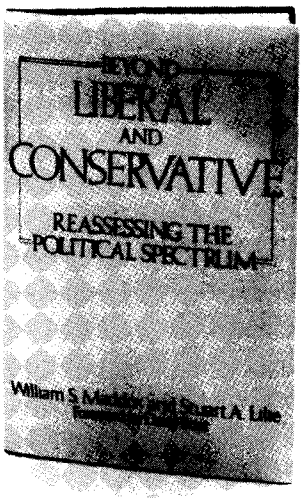

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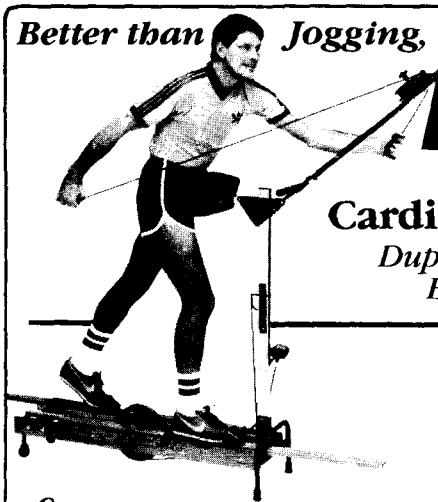

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phant Man and the TV film of "The Naked Civil Servant," is Winston and is wonderful. His very face and voice suggest exile, banishment to this planet from some happier place, yet with resolve, with no slightest self-pity. Richard Burton is O'Brien, and the fact of Burton's death gives poignance even to his pensive sadism here. How easily he *fills* the character. When John Gielgud heard of Burton's death, he said (as I recall) that the news made him especially sad when he thought of all that this great talent had not done. That sadness haunts the screen here.

The music by Dominic Muldowney and the Eurhythmics features two numbers called "Sexcrime" and "I Did It Just the Same." The temper of the music was intended, I guess, to suggest suppressed freedoms.

Department of Howlers. Two weeks ago, in a review of *A Passage to India*, I listed Solzhenitsyn as one of the authors whom David Lean has adapted to the screen. Forgive. It ought to have been Pasternak (*Doctor Zhivago*).

THE LAWYERS' PLOT

The Willowbrook Wars: A Decade of Struggle for Social Change by David J. Rothman and Sheila M. Rothman

(Harper & Row, 405 pp., $27.95)

At the close of Arthur Miller's *A View From the Bridge*, the lawyer Alfieri reflects on the tragic events that have unfolded and concludes, "it is better to settle for half, it must be!" That is no longer a popular view, especially among activist lawyers who see litigation as a tool for social reform. Their guiding premise has been that the third branch has a monopoly on justice and should therefore expand its domain into policy areas until now thought to be the province of the legislature and the executive.

Although much has been said about the role of the courts in such controversial areas as abortion, busing, school prayer, and affirmative action, remarkably little has been written about the effect of judicial decision making on the care of the mentally disabled. This paucity of ink can hardly be attributed to the magnitude of the effects: judicially inspired changes in this area have been truly dramatic. Where institution-based care prevailed not long ago, today the mentally disabled are increasingly found in the "community"—either in small group residences or, sometimes, in the streets. The number of people in state institutions for the mentally ill has declined from almost 500,000 in the mid-1960s to less than 150,000 today. Among the mentally retarded—people who, by all accounts, will always require some form of supervised care—the number of institutional residents has dropped from over 200,000 to less than half that figure. At the same time, the cost (and most would say the quality) of institutional care for those who remain has gone up considerably.

These changes are in large part the result of a sophisticated legal strategy pursued in the federal courts over the past dozen years. The strategy had three basic components, reflected in three lines of cases. First, there were the cases that narrowed the criteria and increased the procedural burdens for commitment to a state institution, making commitment more difficult and accordingly less common. Second, there were the right-to-treatment cases, requiring institutional reform, which, in turn, made institutional care more expensive. One way to deal with these increasing financial demands was to decrease the number of people cared for. Third, there were the cases establishing the right to the "least restrictive alternative" form of care, a right that not only demanded removal of patients from institutions, but that also required the development of community-based residential alternatives for them.

One of the surprising things about this litigation is that, in the early years at least, it was often more collaborative than adversarial. Faced with the potential humiliation of defending an abysmal state institution before not only a judge but a group of eager reporters as well—and usually hoping that a court order would free up funds that the legislature had refused to appropriate—the defendant mental health and retardation officials frequently agreed to enter into a consent decree. These decrees typically involved a detailed set of specific correctives, accompanied by broad, open-ended commitments, such as assuring human dignity, maximizing individual potential, and providing care in the least restrictive setting, whatever that meant.

As with any major law reform effort, the road to success was marked by a number of important legal decisions. Identifying the true landmarks, much like picking the best center fielder in New York in 1956, often depends on whether you are from Manhattan, Brooklyn, or the Bronx. But for public interest lawyers engaged in mental disability reform litigation, the Willowbrook case in New York certainly had it all: a dismal institution; a stellar cast of attorneys; a moderate (but compassionate) judge, followed by a devoted activist one; a change in governors at a key time; a talented group of young, fresh mental retardation professionals; and a treatment ideology—"normalization"—whose time had come. Collectively, these factors produced more than a decade of litigation and massive social change. It is this remarkable story that David and Sheila Rothman chronicle in *The Willowbrook Wars*.

DAVID Rothman, a social historian and lawyer-manqué, and Sheila Rothman, a hands-on social worker and student of contemporary social change, have combined their talents to produce an important book. Although the authors' partisanship detracts from their ability to present the state's side of the story fully and fairly, there is too much that is too good here not to pay honest tribute. The Rothmans' book presents a clear and compelling account of complicated legal and political strategies and skirmishes; it reflects comprehensive factual research and field work; and it tells a fascinating story in gripping fashion.

The saga begins in 1972. Willowbrook, located in Staten Island, then housed 5,400 retarded people from all

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over New York City. Some of these residents had been abandoned by their families, many at birth or shortly thereafter. To describe Willowbrook in Auschwitz-like terms was not a complete exaggeration. Images of naked bodies twisting on cold concrete floors, soiled by their own waste and being injected with hepatitis for experimental purposes, provided a fair picture. The physical plant was grim and the number of staff woefully inadequate. The residents were left to languish in accordance with the basic political credo of out of sight, out of mind. Into this setting entered a few committed social reformers who had just left the agitated college campuses of the 1960s. These intruders were not prepared to go along with the demands of bureaucratic complacency. They decided instead to set in motion a series of events that led to Geraldo Rivera's dramatic television exposé of Willowbrook in January 1972, which was followed shortly by the filing of the Willowbrook suit.

The lead lawyer for the plaintiffs during the early years of the suit was Bruce Ennis, then a staff attorney at the New York Civil Liberties Union and co-founder of the Mental Health Law Project. When the Rivera exposé was aired, Ennis was already involved in *Wyatt* v. *Stickney*—a case challenging conditions in Alabama's facilities for the mentally disabled—where he had learned an important lesson. The federal court in *Wyatt*, after condemning conditions at the state's institutions, had ordered that the conditions be improved. The result was to increase institutional funding, thereby assuring that residents were more likely to remain, both because their situation would be made more tolerable and because there would be less money available for establishing community-based alternatives.

ENNIS and his colleagues, who were committed to moving institutional residents to the community, would not allow the Wyatt experience to be repeated at Willowbrook. Thus, while the formal legal complaint in the Willowbrook case graphically described the abuses at the institution, the requested relief was not (primarily) improved conditions. Rather, the plaintiffs demanded to be placed in small community-based homes, maintaining that they were entitled to such placements by dint of the legal concept of the right to the least restrictive alternative, a right they claimed to find in the Constitution. In short, the gravamen of the plaintiffs' theory was that institutions were inherently unacceptable. There was no such thing as a good institution; there were only different degrees of bad. It made no difference that the Willowbrook residents were an extremely disabled group. Most had been institutionalized for decades, had I.Q.'s below 30, were virtually unable to care for themselves, and could barely speak; many also suffered from severe physical handicaps, including epilepsy and blindness. In the minds of the plaintiffs' lawyers, there was no doubt that these people—and the communities into which they were to be placed—would adjust.

THIS WAS a bold and unprecedented strategy. In contrast to a suit aimed at improving conditions, it was bound to provoke dissension even among traditional allies. Families of Willowbrook residents, as well as the staff and leadership of the facility, would certainly welcome a better institution. But the prospect of creating community alternatives was anxiety-provoking. Staff worried because they feared for their jobs and, perhaps to a lesser degree, for the fate of the residents. Families worried because they feared that their children would not be able to cope, especially in communities that did not want them, and because a community home, unlike an institution, seemed impermanent, thus heightening concerns about long-term stability.

The plaintiffs' de-institutionalization approach had other problems as well. It was sure to increase the resistance of the state. To undo a bureaucracy that is secured by a host of long-entrenched interests, while confronting communities unwilling to accept their new neighbors, would not be easy. Moreover, the approach had little constitutional support, either in established case law or well-developed theory. It is one thing to claim that a state cannot keep human beings in degrading and debilitating facilities; it is entirely different to argue that the state must abandon these facilities and adopt a whole new clinical approach to care. At some point even the most ardent judicial reformer is forced to admit that the constitutional concerns tail off and the domain of traditional political choice begins.

Orrin Judd, the judge assigned to the Willowbrook case, was concerned about the thinness of the legal support for the plaintiffs' position. A moderate Republican appointed by President Nixon, Judd was not by temperament a judicial activist. Early in the litigation he made clear that, while he would not turn his back on the Willowbrook residents, he was not likely to march to the drumbeat sounded by the plaintiffs' lawyers.

As with most things, good luck is often more important than good planning, and in 1975 and early 1976 fortune produced for the Willowbrook lawyers what planning could not. New York

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elected a new Democratic administration, headed by Hugh Carey, to replace the Republican administrations of Rockefeller and Wilson. Soon thereafter the Willowbrook case was assigned to a new judge, John Bartels, as a result of Judge Judd's untimely death.

The effect of the first change was that the state was willing to enter into a consent agreement. Like any new government, the Carey administration could readily blame the horrible practices at Willowbrook on its predecessor, publicly repudiate them, and embark on a new era of cooperation. The consent decree became the symbol of that new beginning. And with it came a talented new group of state administrators who were given an extraordinary amount of discretion and authority to address the problems at Willowbrook.

The effect of the second change was that the plaintiffs' lawyers got a judge who was strongly sympathetic to their cause. Operating under the consent decree, which contained state commitments to vague goals like assuring dignity and providing care in the least restrictive setting, Judge Bartels had significantly greater flexibility than he would have had if the basic constitutional issues had remained in dispute. The judge quickly made clear that he was prepared to construe the generalized promises of the decree in favor of the plaintiffs' efforts to secure more, and more rapid, community placements. Bartels meant to hold the state to its word and was not prepared to countenance dilatory or revisionist tactics. Repeatedly, when disputes arose, he ruled for the plaintiffs.

EVEN so, the years between 1976 and 1980 still proved difficult for the proponents of community care. They needed to find groups willing to establish and operate the residences, places to locate them, people to staff them, and ways to monitor them. In view of these obstacles, it was no small accomplishment that over a thousand Willowbrook residents had been located in community homes by early 1980. Some of these placements proved to be heartwarming success stories, but there were also mistakes: people had to be relocated, sometimes more than once, and a few community residences were probably as bad as Willowbrook had been. Still, on balance, it can fairly be said that the movement to the community was a success. During the same period, moreover, many other Willowbrook residents had been transferred to smaller, less-crowded institutions, and Willowbrook itself had been improved significantly. By any measure not a bad overall result. Had Arthur Miller's Alfieri been in charge, he probably would have declared victory and backed off for fear of pushing the reform process beyond its breaking point.

REGRETTABLY, perhaps, this was not Alfieri's case. The plaintiffs' lawyers, along with the court-appointed panel of mental retardation professionals and lawyers responsible for monitoring implementation of the consent decree, continued to press. Willowbrook had to be closed; all residents had to be placed in the community; and no home could have more than ten or 15 beds (depending on the population served), as provided for in the decree. Human rights being at stake, it was of no moment that pragmatic impediments to further community placement continued to increase, and that the state's financial burden was escalating out of control.

Inevitably, the reaction set in. Cooperative state officials were replaced by hard-nosed bureaucrats. The legislature in early 1980 refused to fund the monitoring panel, thus cutting out the eyes and ears of the court. Although Bartels held the state in contempt for this refusal, the Court of Appeals reversed him. This was the first major judicial setback for the Willowbrook lawyers.

Temporarily chastened, the lawyers began to move toward reconciliation. But the juggernaut they had put in place was too powerful even for them to control: having won so often in court, and having repeatedly encouraged their supporters to remain unyielding, the plaintiffs' lawyers could not put on the brakes. Compromise thus proved impossible, and once again Judge Bartels was called in, this time to decide whether a single, court-appointed master should be assigned to monitor the decree, and whether the state should be prohibited from using 50-bed transitional facilities for Willowbrook residents. Bartels sided with the plaintiffs on both issues. Once again, however, the Court of Appeals stepped in.

In early 1983 a distinguished, rather liberal panel of the court reversed Bartels on the issue of the number of beds. More significantly, the appeals court expressed doubt about the clinical soundness of plaintiffs' demand for universal community-based care, and made clear that the consent decree was not an immutable contract, but was instead a flexible set of principles that needed to be adjusted to practical realities and changing conditions. This ruling was devastating for the plaintiffs' lawyers. As the Rothmans put it, "the Court of Appeals delivered what may be a death sentence to this consent judgment (and perhaps others as well)."

THERE SOON proved to be more to this prophecy than even the Rothmans could have anticipated. A Willowbrook-style action was brought against a 1,000-bed institution in Suffolk, New York, by two of the lawyers on the Willowbrook court-appointed review panel. This time, however, there was no consent decree; the state fought the case all the way. Although the federal district court ordered community placement for half the residents, the Court of Appeals in June 1984 reversed in almost summary fashion. In the court's words "no [institutional] resident is deprived of freedom from undue restraint or of any other constitutional right merely because he or she lives at [an institution]. Therefore, the order of community placement was in error."

In practical effect, this decision, coupled with the flexible approach to the Willowbrook consent decree adopted by the appeals court in 1983, meant that the Willowbrook case was history. Having once stood so strong in the arsenal of reform litigation, the Willowbrook decree did not even receive a decent burial. Its last rites were delivered in another case.

What can be said of all this? The Rothmans' answer is contained in a brief concluding chapter that is, in many ways, the least satisfying part of the book. Straining to maintain the appearance of academic neutrality in the face of advocates' instincts, the authors nevertheless begin from the position that community care is preferable to institutional care for retarded individuals, no matter what the degree or nature of their disabilities. The Rothmans then quickly discuss a host of structural issues—concerning the role of courts, the role of plaintiffs' lawyers in speaking for a group that cannot speak for itself, and the unpredictable economic and allocational effects of class-action litigation. They admit that these issues are troubling, but in the end they are will-

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ing to sidestep the problems for results they endorse.

The problems are considerably more serious than the Rothmans let on. To begin with, there is a debate, not acknowledged by the Rothmans, over the clinical benefits of moving Willowbrook residents into the community. Without denigrating the good that was achieved, there is still reason to question whether the expression of unqualified enthusiasm for community care is not more the product of salesmanship and/or wishful thinking than of experience. Several researchers who have studied community programs, including those developed in response to the Willowbrook decree, have pointed out that there has been tremendous staff turnover in the community (greater than anything seen at most institutions), that essential services are often fragmented and less effective there, and that some residents are much more restricted in small urban apartments than on an open campus setting.

Furthermore, given that those who are easier to place are usually moved first when a facility is emptied, the large number of people currently remaining in institutions may present even greater problems. At the very least, further placements are likely to be more expensive, a significant problem considering that existing placements are already often very costly. In short, it is by no means clear that community care will retain its exalted status in the long run. Institutions, too, were once seen as great humanitarian reforms. Time manages to temper such unambivalent assessments.

AS A RESULT, it is important to stress that there was in 1972, and remains today, an overriding strategic choice in institutional reform litigation: to improve the institution or insist on its demise. Who is to decide which course to pursue? In Willowbrook, a few lawyers, assisted by mental retardation professionals who shared their ideological preference, called the shots for the 5,400 silent residents. By what right does such a self-appointed group arrogate this power to itself? Because they filed suit first?

There is also the problem of judicial limitations. The Rothmans make much of the efforts of the plaintiffs' lawyers to see to it that their case was assigned to a favorable judge. Should basic questions of social policy turn on this kind of caprice? And how likely is it that any judge will be able to get enough information to make truly informed decisions? Whatever the shortcomings of expert testimony in general, it is especially ill-suited to reform litigation where the ability to dress up personal value preferences in scientific doctrine is great. In these circumstances, "testifying and carrying out research," as the Rothmans state, "are activities more antithetical than anyone who does both would like to admit."

Furthermore, the piecemeal nature of reform litigation has far-reaching consequences. In this case, the lawyers selected Willowbrook, although there were many other deficient institutions in New York in 1972. The effects of this selection were profound. When choices had to be made about who received community placements or which institution got extra financial assistance, Willowbrook residents always fared best. The state was simply unwilling to make neutral decisions about allocation when only its treatment of Willowbrook residents was subject to judicial criticism or a contempt citation. Was that fair to the other 15,000 institutional residents in New York?

Lastly there is the troubling issue of costs. It is not merely that judges, concerned about rights, are likely to be less attentive to finances; more significantly, judges have almost no way to remain intelligently informed about these matters. Questions about the significance of average and marginal costs as institutional residents move to the community, and how to calculate community costs accurately when different services like medical care, day programming, and transportation are charged to different budgets and subject to differing federal contributions, are not easily answered.

Even when figures are available, moreover, they often have little meaning. One study of a small group home for ex-Willowbrook residents calculated the total cost to be $130,000 per person annually. Even assuming this number was at the high end of the spectrum, individual costs in the range of $75,000 per year were certainly not uncommon. Suppose institutional care in a humane facility could be provided for significantly less. Should that consideration matter when we are dealing with essentially indeterminate rights like human dignity and personal fulfillment. The answer, I should think, must depend at

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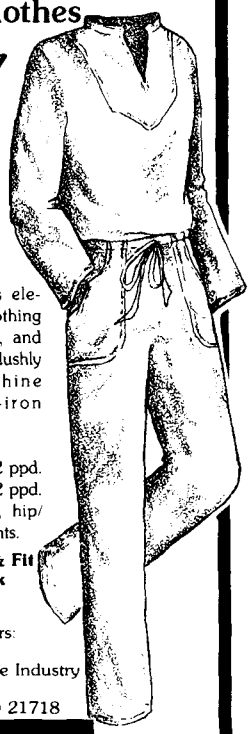

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least in part on what we are spending for ghetto youths on food and education. A judge has no idea of the various numbers, let alone how to balance them. The Rothmans' cynical suggestion that if the money did not go to Willowbrook residents it "would go to building another missile silo or rescuing a bankrupt corporation" is simply a recognition that they have no answer to this perplexing question of distributive justice. These financial problems were complicated by the fact that many new (often less severely) retarded citizens moved into the community homes as those homes proliferated. Thus those who might otherwise have remained with their families became the permanent economic responsibility of the state. The bottom line is that during the first decade of the Willowbrook case the New York budget for mental retardation more than doubled in real dollars, a significantly higher growth rate than for any other state department.

These caveats are not meant to suggest that the courts have no role to play in enforcing basic constitutional rights when the provision of human services is at stake. On the contrary, there is indeed a critical judicial role in this area: to guarantee that there are no Willowbrooks of 1972, whether they have 5,000 or five beds. More modest, to be sure, but also more enduring.

JOEL KLEIN

Joel Klein is an attorney at Onek, Klein, and Farr. He has represented parents of the institutionalized retarded in class-action litigation.

INCONTINENT IMAGINATION

Collected Stories
by Gabriel García Márquez
translated by Gregory Rabassa

(Harper & Row, 311 pp., $16.95)

Frequently the history of literature (or the history of human gullibility) spews up a novel that becomes an "intellectual best-seller"—a book that all persons with literary or intellectual pretensions feel obliged to acquire, and some even to read. It may be the worst work by an established artist whose "best-seller time" has come. This was the case with Nabokov's *Ada*, even though the book was—is—unreadable. Or it may be the tome of a clever counterfeiter, a prestidigitator or *fumiste*—of skill but no substance—as in the case of Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*. Or it may simply be the book of a mediocre but newly emerged writer of strange origin or bent that strikes even some usually judicious people as unusual, original, unique (never mind that it is factitious, trivial, and, to be honest about it, boring). Such a book is—was—Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, which earned its author the Nobel Prize, won by such other prodigious Latin American writers as Miguel Ángel Asturias (at least unpretentious) and the unspeakable Gabriela Minstral, but never by Jorge Luis Borges, the one who most deserves it.

To read *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is to dive into a mountain of cotton candy head first and brain last, and endlessly, suffocatingly, sickeningly try to eat one's way out of it. This book that, without false modesty, could call itself *One Thousand Years of Solitude* is repetitious beyond anything but an old-time movie serial, with characters that even a genealogical chart cannot individuate (why should it? since when is the writer's job done by a chart?); the same sticky-sweet mixture of fantasy and social satire stretches on and on. Its mischievousness loses whatever edge it might have through iteration, lip-smacking enjoyment of its own cleverness, and flights into a fancy that seems to me the evasion rather than the extension of truth.

I had no better luck with two short novels by this writer, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*. Still, it seemed possible that he could achieve more with less—in the short story, which might curb his passion for prolixity. And indeed there are in the *Collected Stories* a few relatively unassuming, predominantly realistic tales that qualify García Márquez as a potential Hispanic Somerset Maugham. There is even one concluding novella in the author's dubious surrealist manner that works well enough, aside from some straining for effect and misfired jokes. For the rest, despite the odd powerful image and some passages of acerb mockery, these stories are mostly exercises in epigonous surrealism, with fantasy squeezed as desperately and self-destructively as when a novice milkmaid mistakes a bull's scrotum for a cow's udder.

The earliest stories, from the collection *Eyes of a Blue Dog*, are the poorest, though here the author has the excuse of his early twenties. In several of them, the protagonist is either a corpse somehow still alive or a living person relentlessly verbose in death. Death-in-life, life-in-death—these parvenu archetypes are pounded in with elaborately contrived, carefully self-contradictory detail. "Madam," says the doctor in "The Third Resignation," the opening story,

> your child has a grave illness: he is dead. Nevertheless . . . we will succeed in making his organic functions continue through a complex system of autonutrition. Only the motor functions will be different. . . . We shall watch his life through growth, which, too, shall continue on [sic] in a normal fashion. It is simply 'a living death.' A real and true death. . . .

Here the preposterous conceit—it has no satirical thrust—has at least a kind of fairy-tale diaphaneity. Presently, pseudo-psychological obfuscation sets in. The living corpse hears terrible noises inside his head: "The noise had slippery fur, almost untouchable," yet our cadaver-hero will "catch it" and "not permit it to enter through his ear again, to come out through his mouth, through each of his pores . . ." etc. But forthwith this "furry" noise "[breaks] its cutglass crystals, its ice stars, against the interior walls of his cranium." Nevertheless, our hero proposes to "Grab it. Squeeze it. . . . Throw it onto the pavement and step on it [until it is] stretched out on the ground like any ordinary thing, transformed into an integral death." Notice that the noise goes from soft and furry to hard and crystalline and back again to something squeezable, thence to something animate that can be stomped on and

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stamped out with an "integral death." A pious hope, that; in García Márquez no death is integral enough.

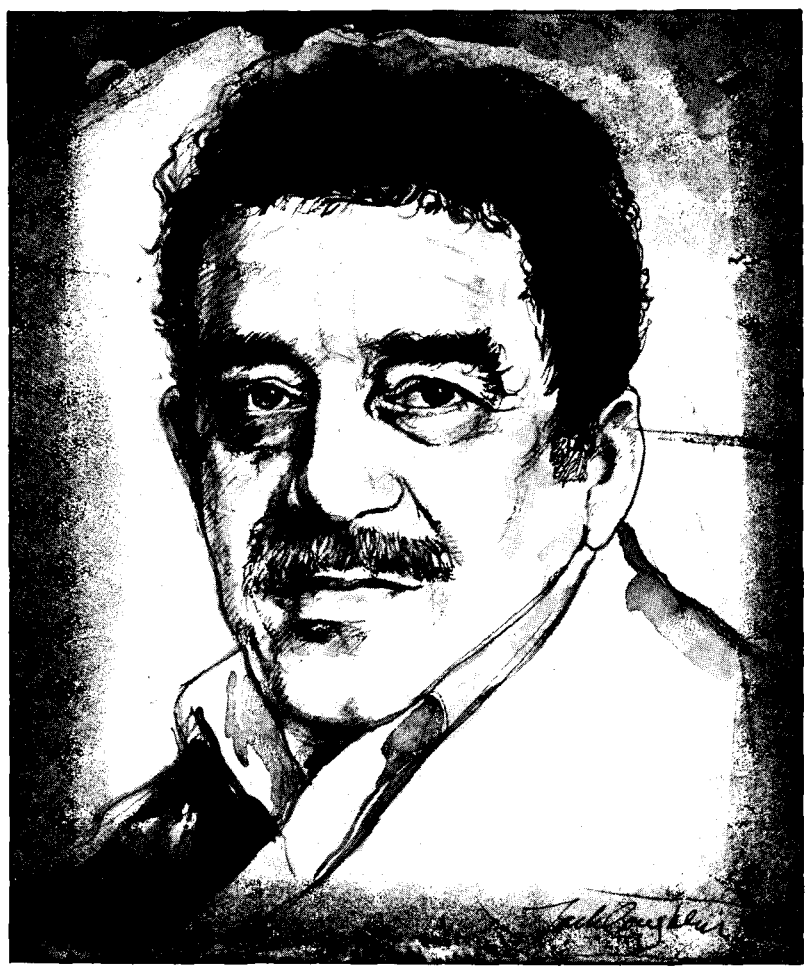
Surrealism is all very well if it has some fidelity to its own bizarre self. A Max Ernst must remain an Ernst; it cannot, must not, transform itself into a Tanguy, a Matta, a Wilfredo Lam, at the whim of its undisciplined creator. Let the image be as crazy and hellish as it wants to be, but let it stay in focus. Out of focus, hell itself is not hell any more. It is only an amorphous blur. Yet from García Márquez's paragraphs of chaos a fine image, at times, surfaces—such as that "silence, as if all the lungs of the earth had ceased breathing so as not to break the soft silence of the air."

In the second story, "The Other Side of Death," a similarly living corpse is haunted by a smell instead of a sound. If, in the previous story, the author played around with tenses, here he fools with pronouns:

> They were traveling in a train—I remember it now [this 'I' comes out of nowhere]—through a country-side—I've had this dream frequently—like a still life, sown with false, artificial trees bearing fruit of razors, scissors, and other diverse items—I remember now that I have to get my hair cut—barbershop instruments. He'd had that dream a lot of times but it had never produced this scare in him. There behind a tree was his brother, the other one, his twin, signaling—this happened to me somewhere in real life—for him to stop the train.

Note the confusion of they, I, and he in what is mostly a third-person-singular story. Note also the sloppiness of "other diverse items." And note the theme of the brother, the twin, the alter ego, that crops up with tiresome frequency in these stories—once it is even a mirror image that bleeds when the shaver does not—and later in the same paragraph another García Márquez favorite, the tumor. Here the character notices one on his middle toe, calmly takes a screwdriver out of his pocket "and extracts the head of the tumor with it." And, sure enough, this character, too, "gently wrapped in the warm climate of a covered serenity . . . felt the lightness of his artificial and daily death."

"Bitterness for Three Sleepwalkers" is even less scrutable. It may—just may—be about the death of a mother as perceived by her three sons. In any case, "she," whoever she is, seems to



GABRIEL GARCÍA MÁRQUEZ BY JACK COUGHLIN

"become dissolved in her solitude" and to have "lost her natural faculty of being present." In "Dialogue With the Mirror," a man "who had had the room before" meditates about the death of a brother. Again the story keeps shifting between a "he" and an "I" and ends with the man shaving before a mirror, which gives the author a chance to have lots of fun with "right" and "left" and "forward" and "backward." In the end the mirror image bleeds, while the man, unbloodied, smells kidneys in gravy and feels "satisfaction—positive satisfaction—that a large dog had begun to wag its tail inside his soul." In the title story, "Eyes of a Blue Dog," a man and a woman inhabit each other's dreams but cannot find each other when awake, because the sleeper, upon waking, forgets the watchword "Eyes of a blue dog" with which to recognize the other. Kipling did this sort of thing better in "The Brushwood Boy."

There follows a straightforward story about a whore who has killed one of her johns and elicits a fake alibi from an ugly restaurateur who adores her and feeds her free of charge. Entitled "The Woman Who Came at Six O'Clock," it is a neatly managed mood piece, situated in the bar-eatery before the evening's clients arrive, and containing such nice turns of phrase as "the man looked at her with a thick, sad tenderness, like a maternal ox." But in "Nabo: The Black Man Who Made the Angels Wait," we are back in the thick of the old farrago with yet another figure hovering in a state that is neither life nor death, and a plot, if that is the word for it, obscurer than any. We get several more such stories, some with ghosts in them, and one, "The Night of the Curlews," that is totally impenetrable. But it is the first to offer a favorite García Márquezian theme: the curious behavior of certain animals. In this instance it is curlews, who blind three men for no apparent reason.

In the stories from the next collection, *Big Mama's Funeral*, Macondo, the mythical locale of most of García Márquez's fiction, becomes more important yet. This Macondo can be anything from a pathetic hamlet to a good-sized town running to seed, and is peopled with the author's stock company of characters who pop up throughout his fiction, short or long. Here the writing is more assured, and some of the besetting mannerisms are kept relatively at bay. They are replaced, however, by new tricks no less annoying. Thus

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"Tuesday Siesta," is a potentially interesting story about a poor woman who travels wretchedly, with her small daughter, to a distant town where her son, caught in the act of robbery, was killed and buried. She carries a cheap bouquet to lay on his grave, and rouses the indolent priest, during the hot hour of the siesta, for the key to the cemetery. But the townsfolk, aroused by her presence, gather ominously around the priest's house as the story abruptly ends. In Luis Harss and Barbara Dohmann's *Into the Mainstream: Conversations With Latin-American Writers*, we read:

> What he first imagined in the story, says García Márquez, was the part he left out. Though not entirely. Somehow what has been omitted is implicit, therefore all the more vivid and powerful.

Would it were so. We know something about the mother, very little about the daughter, and nothing at all about the townspeople except that they love their siesta. There is not enough to make up for missing confrontation. There is not even a denouement, only an anticlimax of the thudding rather than the teasing variety. García Márquez has said that he considers revelations "a bad literary device" and consequently avoids them. The avoidance, I think, is mutual.

Finally, the stories from the *Eréndira* volume, written between 1968 and 1972, are in the author's maturest style and perfectly display its generous flaws and niggardly virtues. Here the surrealism has become formulaic: in "A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings," a senile, moth-eaten angel falls out of the sky and confounds Macondo, which, however, loses interest when the sideshows of an itinerant carnival become more popular. Eventually, the angel just flies away. Conversely, in "The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World," the sea washes up a gorgeous, oversized male corpse, impeccably preserved; as the townswomen all fall in love with him while dressing him in whatever large enough finery they can muster, he has to be tossed back into the waves.

The long and fairly controlled title novella, "The Incredible and Sad Tale of Innocent Eréndira and Her Heartless Grandmother," is probably all the García Márquez one needs to read for a full sampling of his ideas, strategies, and techniques. A mélange of the surreal, scurrilous, and occasionally poetic, it tells of a monstrous, larger-than-life grandmother who, having always exploited her lovely granddaughter Eréndira, now travels all over with her and prostitutes her to all comers until her alleged debt for supposedly causing their house to burn down is paid back by Eréndira, on her back. The debt is self-perpetuating, and it is only after many years of weird and grueling adventures that the girl, with the help of a lover, manages to do in the grandmother, who takes more killing than Rasputin. Gathering up her ill-gained fortune, Eréndira abandons the lovesick youth and vanishes. Along its way, the novella takes satirical potshots at government, religion, capitalism, family relations, passion, and whatnot, and generally maintains its narrative propulsion despite its curlicues and discontinuities. Though there is wit, horror, and even wistfulness aplenty, the supernatural elements contribute little beyond a superficial exoticism, and one must finally wonder whether the story's eccentricities do not cancel one another out.

Translated conscientiously, though sometimes ungrammatically, by Gregory Rabassa and (the *Big Mama* volume) S. J. Bernstein, these stories sorely lack a philosophical or emotional center. "In García Márquez's world, love is the primordial power that reigns as an obscure, impersonal, and all-powerful presence," wrote Octavio Paz in *Alternating Current*. Obscurity and impersonality, to be sure, abound in these *Collected Stories*, but they contain more obfuscatory deliquescence than concentrated power. And they seem to have precious little to do with love, unless you call love a minor writer's obsession with telling tall tales such as his beloved grandmother told him, a boy of eight, to make him sleep. "Nothing interesting has happened to me since," García Márquez has said, and we are compelled to believe him. But he has certainly learned his grandmother's lessons well: with his fabulating, he can put even grown-ups to sleep.

JOHN SIMON

John Simon is drama critic for *New York* magazine and film critic for *National Review*.

THE CARDINAL AND COMMUNISM

Cardinal Wyszynski: A Biography by Andrzej Micewski translated from the Polish by William R. Brand and Katarzyna Mroczkowska-Brand

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 474 pp., $17.95)

Polish wits like to tell the story of a mediocre painter who was commissioned to paint the figure of God the Father. Thrilled by the greatness of his subject, he vowed to do all his painting on his knees. After a few days of such work, God suddenly appeared to him in person and thundered impatiently: "My son, you are not supposed to paint me on your knees. You are supposed to paint me well."

Andrzej Micewski's biography of the late Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski, Primate of Poland, is a book by someone who never really gets up off his knees. A respected Catholic journalist and historian, Micewski founds his work on solid research, including previously unknown documents and his own conversations with the Primate. On the factual level, the book is indeed informative and cogent. Every detail of the portrayal of Wyszynski, however, wallows *in adore sanctitatis*. We read about the "supernatural radiance" of his personality and "an intersection of the human and the divine in the way he fulfilled [his] role," even though the biography ostensibly focuses on "the temporal, sociopolitical role of the Primate of Poland." The cardinal's theological, ecclesiastical, political, and social decisions and undertakings are presented as infallible and ultimately triumphant; the stances he assumed toward various issues are uniformly defended and

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praised. In other words, we are dealing with hagiography, not biography.

This can only be regretted, especially since Micewski's book is the most ambitious attempt to date to present the cardinal's extraordinary role as the *interrex* of People's Poland, the most powerful moral authority to serve as a substitute for the absent authority of the country's political rulers. To be sure, Wyszynski was a truly great man, and I cannot imagine the skeptic who could deny his historic role. I find no difficulty in agreeing with Micewski when he describes Wyszynski as Poland's "only postwar statesman," who "in fact performed the function of national leader," even though the clergyman became a statesman "against his own will," under the pressure of historical circumstances. We must realize that Wyszynski had been a bishop since 1946 and was the Primate of Poland from 1948 until his death in 1981. His *interregnum*, then, coincides almost exactly with the history of Church-state relations in Communist Poland.

BESIDES occasional moments of glory, such as the Primate's release from prison in 1956, the triumphant celebration of Poland's millennium of Christianity in 1966, or the 1978 election of the Polish pope, Wyszynski's tenure consisted of years of bitter struggle with the regime. It is a regime that has always been bent on the elimination, or at least the forcible restriction, of the Church's spiritual influence; it has resorted to an enormous range of vicious tricks in order to achieve this, from creating fake movements of "patriotic priests" and "progressive Catholic laymen," police and administrative harassment of priests and believers, to imprisonment of the Primate himself (in 1953), as well as some of his close associates. On these rough seas, the cardinal always steered his own steady course, constantly strengthening the Church's grip on the souls of this overwhelmingly Catholic and increasingly anti-Communist nation. In fact, the political authorities were obliged to reckon with his power to such an extent that they were forced more than once to come to their Canossa and ask the Primate for help in calming down the rebellious populace.

Throughout the book, one comparision recurs, refrain-like—the comparison of Wyszynski and the Hungarian Cardinal Mindszenty. Unlike the latter, "a man of great character and principles, but entirely devoid of flexibility," Wyszynski's historical greatness was, according to the author, "a result of steadfastness of principle combined with flexibility of action." Mindszenty, in Micewski's view, lost his battle: "Despite his personal heroism he achieved for the Hungarian Church not even a fraction of what Wyszynski achieved for the Polish Church." Wyszynski, on the other hand, came out on top. Picking his tortuous way between defiance and reconciliation, stepping back whenever necessary and advancing whenever possible, making truces with the Marxist-Leninist devil (such as the 1950 Church-state agreement) but never signing pacts with him, he led his Church to its present and unique stature of perhaps the most indestructible of the many institutions that the Communists have tried to destroy. If today's Poland is a one-of-a-kind example of a country ruled by a totalitarian apparatus but inhabited by a people who are virtually immune to totalitarian ideology (and do not attempt to overthrow the system only because of the presence of Soviet tanks), Wyszynski's personal contribution to this state of affairs cannot be overlooked.

There is a question, however, that Micewski never asks: if the long-term victory has been Wyszynski's, was he equally triumphant in every individual action he undertook? What was the price that he (and the entire Catholic Church of Poland under his guidance) had to pay for his victory? What is, from today's perspective, the ratio between losses and gains? And finally, what actually was Wyszynski's legacy, and what has become of it?

THE LATE Primate's idea of the Church's coexistence with a Communist state could be visualized, I think, in terms of an image of a besieged fortress. True, the commanders of the fortress were open to negotiations with the enemy (although they would never have considered the possibility of surrender). Still, life behind fortified walls is sooner or later bound to mold in certain ways the mentality of the besieged—and particularly of those in charge of the defense.

First of all, there emerges a natural need for a strong center of command, for a charismatic and decisive leader who would be responsible for an efficient defense, even at the price of assuming dictatorial power. Wyszynski was such a leader, and the fortress of the Polish Church defended itself splendidly under his command. But the principle of hierarchical subordination (modified to a considerable extent, to be sure, by the element of pluralism secured by the episcopate's role in making decisions) can have certain aftereffects. In every dictatorship, for instance, obedient subordinates have a much greater chance of being promoted than independent spirits. Sometimes just such a yes-man can become the dictator's handpicked successor and eventually leave behind nothing but a smoking trail of political gaffes and blunders.

Second, successful defense of the fortress requires the unity and the unanimity of the besieged. This can be achieved by creating a common bond of ideas and beliefs, which are made more accessible, in turn, through a set of popular symbols. (Wyszynski, as his biographer points out, assigned such tasks to the Marian cult, which forms the essence of traditional Polish Catholicism.) Again, the Polish Church has been extremely successful in achieving this. But in order to preserve the ranks, it is sometimes necessary to give the cold shoulder to those who discuss too much, think too much, complicate things too much. Thus the reverse side of Wyszynski's striving for unity of the believers was always his mistrust of intellectuals (in 1965, he mentioned explicitly in one of his articles that "intellectuals pose a danger when they want

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to overintellectualize the Church [. . .] The Church must minister in a language everyone understands"); of laymen with their own ideas of Christianity (see the history of his reluctant reconciliation with Znak, an important group of lay Catholics); and of possible allies from non-Catholic camps (especially that of the liberal left, with which the cardinal had a long history of mutual misunderstandings, analyzed several years ago in Adam Michnik's excellent book *The Church, The Left, The Dialogue*). In other words, Wyszynski treated dissenters within the fortress and potential helpers who were ready to fight the same enemy outside the fortress with equal suspicion. It is proof of his greatness, however, that in the last decade of his life he did finally acknowledge the role of and offer support to lay organizations of Catholic intellectuals, as well as to non-Catholic human rights' groups.

THIRD, the most ominous danger that the defenders of a fortress sometimes face is that its defense can ultimately become a self-serving purpose, a goal in itself. In the end, the walls may seem more important than the people they are supposed to protect. It should be said here that the Polish Catholic Church, in the view of this writer, has never succumbed to such an illusion. There were many situations, however, in which its position toward issues that concerned Polish society as a whole appeared vague or detached. In 1978, after the election of John Paul II, the philosopher Leszek Kolakowski asked the Polish Church a crucial question: did it oppose the totalitarian system because of its atheism or because of its totalitarianism? The answer is important, since it is quite imaginable that the system could offer considerable concessions, or even grant privileges, to the Church. If programmatic atheism, then, ceased to be a component of the system, would the Church continue to oppose its totalitarian component?

But Kolakowski's question remained unanswered. It was not fully answered, for instance, by Wyszynski's unfortunate and confused sermon of August 1980, which seemed to the striking workers to be more a redundant appeal for rejection of violence (was there any violence?) than an expression of support for their defense of human dignity. It has not been answered by the current situation either, in which the present Primate of Poland much too often assumes the role of mediator between society and its oppressors (admonishing the former too much and the latter too little), rather than that of protector of society against its oppressors.

But the Catholic Church of Poland is not identical with its Primate. As I write, the flowers on the grave of Father Jerzy Popieluszko are still fresh, even though the priest was murdered a few months ago; hundreds of anonymous believers visit the grave every day. What is the true legacy of Cardinal Wyszynski—Archbishop Glemp's "flexibility" or Father Popieluszko's steadfastness? Is it still possible to combine these two qualities? Where is the boundary, under present circumstances, beyond which the Polish Church will have to pronounce another "*non possumus*"? These questions, I'm afraid, will also have to remain unanswered. But not for long.

STANISLAW BARANCZAK

Stanislaw Baranczak, a Polish author who came to the United States in 1981, is now a professor of Polish literature at Harvard.

MIDWESTERN WASTELAND

White Noise
by Don DeLillo

(Viking, 321 pp., $16.95)

Yeats once remarked that sex and death were the proper concerns of literature. Don DeLillo's abiding concerns are technology and death, and in this he may be one of our few truly postmodern writers. His novels have ranged widely across American and foreign landscapes, engaged subjects as diverse as advertising, football, astrophysics, espionage, and rock 'n' roll. DeLillo's voice is unmistakable, his obsessions constant. He is a virtuoso systems analyst, exploring the increasingly complex strategies we deploy in our attempts to beat back primal fears. In DeLillo's universe, technology is both cure and disease, the doomed master plot against death. DeLillo's novels not only have plots, they are about plots. He is a conspiracy theorist. The hazy and rigorous world of espionage is his central metaphor for all systems. The lover's deceptions are of a kind with the scheming of intelligence agents.

In his last novel, *The Names*, DeLillo worked on a global scale, juxtaposing the manipulations of multinational corporations and the C.I.A. with the primitive quest of a cult group dedicated to restoring lost innocence by killing victims on the basis of the letters of their names. In *White Noise*, his eighth novel, the setting is middle America. Jack Gladney is a professor at a midwestern college. He is a family man, a station wagon driver, a TV watcher, a patron of supermarkets and shopping malls. But this quotidian American realm is shot through with exotic and dangerous material: radiation, Third World cults, industrial waste, tabloid fantasy which is barely lurid enough to stay ahead of fact. The exotic and the banal are inextricable, merged in a bombardment of data from television, the radio, speakers in the supermarket—electronic voices peddling goods, entertainment, information.

Gladney is chairman of the department of Hitler studies. He is, in fact, the founder of Hitler studies in America, an academic boom industry. His invention of this interdisciplinary kingdom, we are given to understand, is partly opportunistic. But, as the novel progresses, Jack's affinity for his subject is gradually revealed. His department shares a building with the popular culture department, the staff of which

> is composed almost solely of New York émigrés, smart, thuggish, movie-mad, trivia crazed. They are here to decipher the natural language of the culture, to make a formal method of the shiny pleasures they'd known in their Europe-shadowed childhoods—an Aristotelianism of bubble-gum wrappers and detergent jingles.

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Gladney, who narrates in the first person, is a reasonable man, just traditional enough to be a little baffled by such colleagues, a little self-mocking about his own discipline. He is a devoted husband and father who is, at 50, the veteran of four previous marriages, two of them to the same woman. All of his former wives have ties to the CIA. Babette, his current wife, embodies all of the virtures that these scheming, secretive and high-strung women lacked. She is a fleshy, motherly woman who teaches classes in posture at the Congregational church, reads tabloids to a blind man once a week, listens to radio talk shows.

DeLillo's portrait of this postnuclear family is one of the simpler pleasures of this novel. Gladney's oldest, Heinrich, is a sullen and precocious 14-year-old who plays chess by mail with a convicted murderer and keeps his father off balance with sophistic deconstructions of conventional wisdom, and bulletins from the frontiers of high school chemistry. Denise, 11, is engaged in a constant campaign to root out her mother's faults, particularly short-term memory loss, and to instruct her stepsister, Steffie, in the cruel ways of the world. Wilder, the baby, is the holy innocent, the pre-verbal totem figure who gives the family a precious and fragile sense of identity.

GLADNEY wants a plotless existence. "All plots tend to move deathward," he tells the students in his advanced Nazism seminar, not quite sure what he means. "This is the nature of plots. Political plots, terrorist plots, lovers' plots, narrative plots, plots that are part of children's games. We edge nearer death every time we plot." When the novel opens he is healthy and has every reason to expect a long life, but Gladney is obsessed with his own mortality. He often wakes in a cold sweat. He and Babette engage in frequent discussions about who will die first, who would be more devastated by loss of the other. Jack's association with Hitler and Nazism, which seems fortuitous and burlesque, is gradually revealed to be a function of his fear. "Helpless and fearful people," a colleague of his suggests, "are drawn to magical figures, mythic figures, epic men who intimidate and darkly loom."

Death threatens suddenly in the form of a chemical spill which releases a poisonous cloud of gas over the town of

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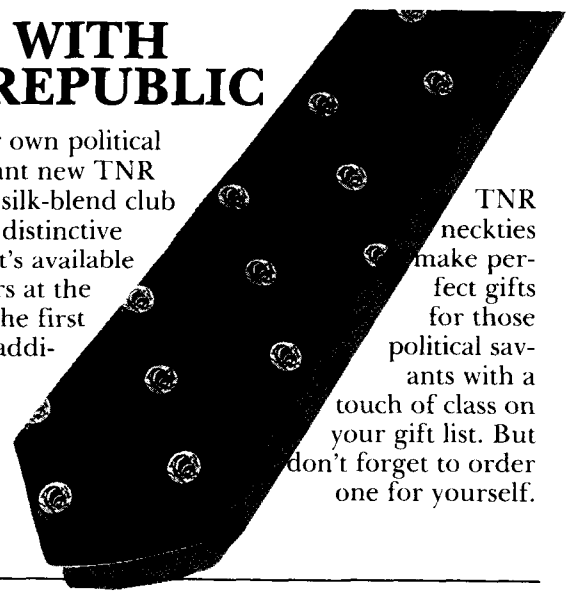

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James River Storm

The window's cracked against rain,
wind whistles inside, freshets
that clear the sky of smeared
clouds like ash on the hearth,
sharp and dead with the damp
that bends the new beard of grass.
Azaleas, tulips breast the field
and jump like distant girls
but I watch one white-haired weed
flex in the fondle of gusts
where winter's last leaves
lie coiled awaiting the sun.

The crack of lightning has rattled off
to leave this stem burn out its time
alone, its child-head white go
thin and scatter seed and fall
to the vacantly open blackness
of earth, which is everything
the river wants in its hunger.
But I let the river go on today,
and its cold, steady hush
like the high drone of a jet
over the Atlantic ferrying
so many glazed, draining faces.

Behind me you rise from another sleep,
your blood-button nipples sudden
as rain in the glass of wine
we forgot. It, too, has waited
the night out, taken what it had to,
known what swells each yard, ditch,
and secret wood until the river
would have it all, even the wine.
Soon the reckless heat of summer
will bake us still as years
of conversations that lapse.

Naked on the edge of my chair, hands
clasping the sill wet as a lucky
branch above an eddy, I feel
this white crone effortlessly
turn to me, its wild milk still
loosing an inward flesh-shudder.
Along the river there are places
no man has seen, grottoes, sleeknesses
of weed this one invites me to.
Each time I turn to you, nothing
has happened to drive me out
of my life, to make me forget
this storm-shimmered root of love.

Dave Smith

Blacksmith. The residents are slow to react, certain that this is something that happens elsewhere, in the Third World or in California. As they flee to an evacuation site, they listen to the radio for news of their own plight. The information is contradictory. Symptoms of exposure to "the airborne toxic event" are constantly revised, and the Gladneys' keep finding themselves exhibiting outdated symptoms, as if the news reports were more powerful agents than the toxin itself. Long after a radio authority has unlisted déjà vu as a symptom of exposure to the gas, the Gladneys continue to experience it. "Is it possible to have a false perception of an illusion?" Jack wonders. "Is a symptom a sign or a thing?"

Information, true or false, becomes part of the landscape. The exact effects of the black cloud, which is eventually dispelled with the help of genetically engineered microorganisms, are never determined. The danger seems to pass, although Jack, who was briefly exposed when he stepped out of his car, eventually learns that some kind of malignancy is developing within him. His fear of death gains a sudden legitimacy.

The black cloud, the "airborne toxic event," is the objective correlative of Jack's fear. It is also the nightmare counterpart of the hypnotic, omnipresent white noise of the title, the banal surface of technology: "the jingles, the slice-of-life commercials, the products hurtling out of darkness, the coded messages, endless repetitions, like chants, like mantras. *Coke is it; Coke is it; Coke is it.*" Watching Steffie sleep in the evacuation shelter, Jack leans close when she begins to mutter something, hoping to be initiated into a mantra of innocence. The words she says are "Toyota Celica."

AFTER THE CLOUD has passed, Jack unwittingly uncovers a plot in his own bedroom. Babette, upon whom he has counted for affirmation of the simple values and unalloyed optimism, reveals that her own paralyzing dread led her to answer a tabloid ad, that she has been involved in secret testing of psycho-active chemical designed to neutralize the fear of death, that she eventually traded her body for the drug. Although she tells Jack that it doesn't work, he becomes haunted as much by the possibility that it *might* work as by her betrayal of him. The vision of the drug is "the benign counterpart" of the black cloud. The drug, if it existed, would represent a triumph of technology over nature. He sets out to find the man who was the project manager for the corporate research team, uncertain of whether he is looking for revenge or a quick fix, discovering in the end that he can't separate these motives.

White Noise is a stunning performance from one of our finest and most intelligent novelists. DeLillo's reach is broad and deep, combining acute observation of the textures of American life and analytic rigor. The accumulation of evidence is sometimes indistinguishable from burlesque as, for example, when DeLillo gives all three of Gladney's wives CIA connections. Although DeLillo consciously, and for the most part deftly, mixes modes, occasionally we see the seams between the real and the surreal; at times the observation seems a little too consciously shaped in the service of thematic impulses. But at his best DeLillo masterfully orchestrates the idioms of pop culture, science, computer technology, advertising, politics, semiotics, espionage, and about 30 other specialized vocabularies. An official in charge of a program to simulate disaster evacuation complains to Gladney about the messiness of the real thing: "The insertion curve isn't as

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smooth as we'd like. There's a probability excess. Plus which we don't have our victims laid out where we'd want them if this were an actual simulation." Because he is so deadly serious, it is not said often enough that DeLillo is tremendously funny. *White Noise* is one of his most accessible novels. Access and interface with it immediately.

JAY MCINERNEY

Jay McInerney is the author of *Bright Lights, Big City* (Vintage). His new novel will be published by Random House in September.

FROST VINDICATED?

Frost: A Literary Life Reconsidered by William H. Pritchard

(Oxford University Press, 286 pp., $15.95)

When the last of Lawrance Thompson's three-volume biography of Frost appeared in 1976, the final deposition was in and there could be no further doubt: Frost was a monster. With few exceptions, this is the view adopted by most of those who have commented on him since. William H. Pritchard, professor of English at Amherst and author of several distinguished books of criticism, has now written a shorter account of Frost's life and work, one purpose of which is to revise prevailing estimates of the poet's character toward something fairer and milder. He also offers a new reading of Frost's poetry, trying to establish links between the life and the work and charting the course of his development from book to book.

There is a need for a compact, readable biography of Frost, something less cumbersome than Thompson's, and, yes, something written with less eagerness to dwell on every one of Frost's personal failings. Among the obstacles standing in the way of such a book, the first is that Frost lived nearly 90 years. It will never be easy to capture his various, active life in a short book. A second obstacle is that, by almost anyone's standard, Frost behaved badly from time to time, and, in the long accumulation of his years, did and said an impressive number of harmful things. No complete biography can avoid mentioning them, but it should still be possible to record Frost's shortcomings without flinging up one's hands in horror. Besides, Frost was usually willing, and with a certain equanimity, to inform on himself, both in poems and in letters to friends. He knew where his own "desert places" lay, and part of his self-esteem was based on making a just evaluation of himself; the prime virtue of truth-telling, for Frost, had to substitute for other more generous qualities. Finally the question is not whether Frost did wrong (he did), but whether that fact is the most important thing for a biographer to consider. There's no reason to let our disappointment at discovering that writers are not saints turn into an orgy of condemnation; biography is not arraignment.

Pritchard's understandable disapproval of the earlier Frost portrait has led him into a recuperative biographical enterprise that is in some ways futile. He might have done better simply to start afresh and attempt a concise, fair account of his poet. As it is, the book depends on our having already read Thompson and being conscious of the negative view of Frost that Pritchard wants to modify. To reconsider every one of Thompson's indictments, however, only reminds us of them. And the reader unfamiliar with Frost's life will often be at sea in this abbreviated book: what is offered is not so much a real biography as the plot summary of a life—with many gaps, as Pritchard admits in his introduction:

> As noted earlier, much is left out: whole areas of his experience like his teaching at Michigan, his long association with the Bread Loaf School of English, details of the houses and towns in which he lived, his travels as an old man to Brazil, Israel, and the Soviet Union, are treated only briefly or not at all. There is probably also a relative lack here of 'memorable' portraits of faces and farms and New England nature; plenty of such portraits are there to be consulted in writings on Frost by Thompson, Sidney Cox, Kathleen Morrison, and others.

This advisory to readers expecting the normal pleasures and substance of biography is fair warning.

Of course Pritchard wouldn't be likely to claim any sort of completeness for his 286 pages (counting notes and index) on Frost—all the more so since he has attempted to make of this a "literary life," dealing with the poems as much as the poet. Here Pritchard might have made his best bid to interest, if not the beginning student, then the Frost expert. He acknowledges important earlier criticism (Jarrell's essays, Reuben Brower's *The Poetry of Robert Frost*, and Richard Poirier's *Robert Frost: The Work of Knowing*) but says,

> Rather than trying to compete with these critics by offering longer, fuller, more 'definitive' analyses of individual poems, I have attempted instead to concentrate on the individual volumes . . . to encounter his poems in their original, first habitats. . . . My methods of dealing with these volumes are the hardly novel ones of description, comparison, evaluation.

Yet isn't it normal to assume that he would give close readings of at least a few of the poems? The nearest Pritchard comes to detailed comment is an examination of "The Road Not Taken," which he cites as an example of a poem often read too superficially. "In fact, it is an especially notable instance in Frost's work of a poem which sounds noble and is really mischievous," he says.

Having put us on our guard against reductive readings, Pritchard seems afterward to let his own vigilance lapse. He offers this lamentable catalogue—among others—of poems from the volume *A Further Range*:

> ". . . other subjects in the new book on which the poet exercised his 'dangerously skeptic' wit were Darwinism ('A Lone Striker'), the right of the needy to a job ('Two Tramps in Mud Time'), the virtues of taking the long view ('In Time of Cloudburst'), bureaucratic efficiency ('Departmental'), and sympathetic identification with other people ('On the Heart's Beginning to Cloud the Mind').

This gives the impression that Pritchard thinks that poems are essays and that

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summary amounts to criticism. The book doesn't, in fact, "compete" with either Brower's or Poirier's; nor is competition really required. But the audience for new works of criticism normally expects fresh insights and important revisions of earlier interpretations.

Still, Pritchard brings to his undertaking two valuable things, a passionate advocacy and a clear, readable style for the most part free of cliché. The chapter devoted to *A Witness Tree*, largely because the critic's emotional engagement in his material made itself felt, led me to return to that book with the sense that it was better than it is usually considered to be. These tonally persuasive passages show that Pritchard is clearly a friend of Frost's poetry. Allegiance, however, is not the same thing as substantive commentary. Pritchard himself acknowledges that he is not up to the mark:

> As one attempts to describe what is going on in these poems one is conscious of faltering; the statements feel inadequate or ludicrously literal-minded. . . . The mythological context is large, but wavering insofar as one feels uneasy in pronouncing grandly at that level ('This sonnet is about Eve and the presence of song'), and the poems don't unambiguously locate a particular speaker in a particular place.

But criticism is never easy, certainly not with a poet as philosophical and still so apparently plain as Frost. Whoever tackles the project must be willing to pronounce as grandly as the instance requires; nor is there any use in hiding a sense of inadequacy behind the impersonal "one."

Pritchard is also hampered by a prejudice (which runs throughout the book) against what he calls the "poetical." He never defines his "poetical," but we can deduce that it means for him whatever cannot be confined in narrowly realistic contexts or, at the level of expression, whatever is elaborate, brilliant, or elevated. In the line of realism and chastened expression, Frost has written many poems of the first order. But not even he can be contained in an aesthetic so hidebound (think of the ecstatic "The Master Speech"). Pritchard never questions his own bias and takes for granted that all readers share it, even to the point of a kind of self-congratulation. He seems in part to have looked to Frost for an endorsement of his attitudes, forgetting that Frost's pronouncements could seldom be taken at face value. It is distressing, for example, to see Pritchard adopt as his own Frost's dismissal of "fancy" interpretations of "Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening." Since Frost (from the platform) said the poem had nothing to do with the temptation to fall forever asleep in darkness and snow, Pritchard joins him in mocking critics who have discussed this meaning in the poem. He ignores the unmistakable allusion (pointed out by Richard Wilbur in his fine essay on Frost) to Beddoes's "The Phantom-Wooer," in which a ghost summons a fair lady to a tomb:

> Our bed is lovely, dark, and sweet;
> The earth will swing us, as she goes,
> Beneath our coverlid of snows,
> And the warm leaden sheet.

But Pritchard is uneasy with large metaphysical contexts and does not explore patterns of allusion. For him, "Stopping By Woods" can be appreciated "only by removing it from its pedestal and noting how it is a miniature revel in such felicities." In a similar vein, he later disparages Jarrell's readings of some of the poems in these terms: the poems are "less humanly and morally profound than he claims." With so resolute a prejudice in favor of middling levels of achievement, both for poet and critic, Pritchard has put the possibility of writing a truly important book about Frost safely out of reach.

If the Pritchard Frost is a less profound poet than others have thought, does this book at least rehabilitate him as a better man? The difficulty for me in answering this question is that I almost never agreed with the construction Pritchard placed on Frost's conduct or the surrounding circumstances. Sometimes he whitewashes Frost's misdeeds or lets them pass without comment; sometimes he gives unconvincing justifications where better ones might be advanced; and sometimes he outdoes Thompson in indemnifying Frost.

In the unfortunate instance of Carol Frost's suicide, Pritchard offers an oddly incomplete exoneration of Frost. He acknowledges that the poet would be difficult to have as a father but points to efforts that Frost made to bolster his son's ego. These were, in fact, substantial. But Pritchard never investigates the part that Elinor Frost must have played in the development of her son's depressive temperament. Almost certainly her embattled, melancholy protectiveness contributed to Carol Frost's mental

THE NEW REPUBLIC'S BEST BOOKS

Following is a list of books TNR *has recently reviewed and recommends.*

Equal Distance by Brad Leithauser (Knopf). An accomplished first novel about young Americans in Japan. (Reviewed 1/21/85)

German Big Business and the Rise of Hitler by Henry Ashby Turner Jr. (Oxford University Press). A surprising study of how little the Nazis owed to the capitalists. (1/21/85)

The Second Industrial Divide: Possibilities for Prosperity by Michael J. Piore and Charles Sabel (Basic). An original and illuminating account of a turning point in our industrial economy. (1/7&14/85)

The Burn by Vassily Aksyonov (Random House). An epic portrait of the surreal and, alas, so real, landscape of Soviet life. (12/31/84)

Zhou Enlai: A Biography by Dick Wilson (Viking). The mixed career of Mao's closest comrade. (12/3/84)

Family Dancing by David Leavitt (Knopf). A collection of well-paced portraits of family life from a new writer. (12/24/84)

Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence by Warren F. Kimball (Princeton University Press). World War II, as witnessed and waged by two great leaders and good friends. (12/24/84)

T. S. Eliot: A Life by Peter Ackroyd (Simon & Schuster). An intelligent, lucid biography of the poet, critic, and man. (12/17/84)

Slavery and Human Progress by David Brion Davis (Oxford University Press). A meditation on the morals and methods of studying slavery. (11/26/84)

Bright Lights, Big City by Jay McInerney (Vintage Books). A funny first novel about getting wired and getting tired in Manhattan. (12/3/84)

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problems. A biographer concerned to place responsibility everywhere it belonged would have gone into this issue. The very fact that the Frost children described their mother as a saint should be enough to raise suspicions.

The final grand-old-Yankee-man-of-letters phase of Frost's career, when he was the familiar of presidents and literary dictators, requires more tact and discrimination than Pritchard brings to it. Age is hard on all men. To understand and tolerate Frost's behavior, we should remember he was just past 80, and besides that a lonely widower and America's most popular poet. Pritchard, however, struggles to make even Frost's unfortunate journey to Soviet Russia look like a personal triumph. He shrugs off the way Frost appropriated the role of spokesman for the American people and then misrepresented Khrushchev's response when questioned by reporters awaiting him at the airport when he returned.

> Thus the tale ended as a cautionary one in which Frost found that 'cutting up,' as he had done at the airport, was more appropriate on the poetry lecture circuit than in the theater of international relations. Still, except for its very end, the trip to Russia by the old poet in the last months of his life, still filled with the most ambitious imaginings and aspirations, is a fine thing to contemplate. He almost brought it off.

Obviously Pritchard wants us somehow to approve of the old prankster. But this, and other instances in the same casuistic vein, can only be described as exoneration of the most incriminating kind. Perhaps it is time to allow that Frost had his failings petty and grand, but to consider that the best consolation for them now is his poetry, much of it based on an intimate knowledge of human darkness; and, of course, Frost's poetry deserves as careful and profound reading as we can give it.

ALFRED CORN

Alfred Corn is a poet and critic. His latest book of poetry, *Notes From a Child of Paradise*, was published last spring by Viking Penguin.

CORRECTION

The title of Paul Johnson's book, incorrectly listed in the January 21 issue, is *Modern Times: The World From the Twenties to the Eighties.*

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 4*

books, etc. Some 95 percent of our kids are black and our emphasis is placed on starting them at kindergarten and first-grade levels. I applaud your article because I think it reaches the very essence of the current problem of racism in our society. I believe that early preparation in education transcends race, color, and religion. In other words, I do not assume all whites are brighter; however, I believe that they are far ahead in preparation for the demands that will be placed upon them in life. We minorities must focus our attention on giving our children the best education available, as early as possible.

HAROLD "HAPPY" HAIRSTON
Los Angeles, California

To the editors:

I was offended by both of your recent articles on race in America. The article by Glenn C. Loury seemed to suggest that blacks would always be left behind politically so long as their leaders remain so "out of touch." Yet it strikes me that Loury is out of touch. Black leaders often appear to hold "radical" views on political issues because of the inability of the white "mainstream" to treat their differing views with anything other than cries of extremism. Why is it that black leaders sticking up for the interest of blacks are viewed as selfish and "out of touch" whereas whites who stick up for their own are "mainstream"? The only reason is that whites are lucky enough to be the majority and so get labeled "the mainstream." Surely the crucial problem facing blacks is not the fact that Jesse Jackson once said "Viva Castro." Their problems include jobs, education, and peace.

Charles Murray's article at least focuses on a real issue—affirmative action. However, he basically tells a series of stories about some bad experiences his friends have had. This should entitle me with equal scientific objectivity to tell some good experiences I have had. Basically, I have talked to many blacks (not just the whites Murray focuses on while "imagining" how blacks feel) who say that affirmative action plans give blacks the kinds of opportunities stolen away from them by years of slavery. Moreover, even if a particular black does not "make it" by Murray's standards, he or she often serves as a role model for others who aspire to at least become doctors and lawyers. And of

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course, many blacks do succeed. Certainly many more succeed having had the opportunity because of affirmative action (or maybe they would have gotten into Harvard anyway!).

The real racial problem Murray addresses is one that whites have and that whites need to cure. Maybe whites like the ones Murray is acquainted with stereotype blacks as inferior. They should overcome their own hang-ups, not use them as a reason to abolish programs that help blacks.

MARK KENDE
Chicago, Illinois

Mr. Loury replies:
Mr. Kende thinks I am "out of touch" for objecting to the linkage of blacks' political aspirations with those of Cuba's Communist dictator. He is right! I am out of touch with those who require a left-leaning "black position" on the nuclear freeze, environmentalism, gay rights, the Communist threat, etc. A benefit of being so "removed" is that I can examine objectively whether the condition of the black underclass is advanced by this left-liberal agenda. I intend to stay "out here" as long as Mr. Kende and his ilk make it necessary.

Pollsters And Jews

To the editors:
Elliott Abrams doesn't know what he is talking about when he suggests that polls conducted by "the national media" exclude heavily Jewish precincts from their exit poll samples ("Correspondence," TNR, December 31). All the national exit polls used a probability-based sample selection of precincts, which selects Jews (and everybody else) wherever they live. This method has a decided advantage over purposely selecting precincts with a high concentration of Jews, as Mr. Abrams seems to favor. Our method is better because it fairly represents the actual distribution of Jews, whether they live in heavily Jewish precincts or elsewhere. Basically, there just aren't that many heavily Jewish precincts in the United States, and most Jews do not live in them.

Methodological arguments aside (and no one complained four years ago when the exit polls reported an unexpectedly strong Reagan showing among Jews), the evidence is clear that few Jewish voters were persuaded to vote for President Reagan. Four national exit polls—ours, ABC News's, NBC News's, and the *Los Angeles Times*'s—all reported Jewish majorities for Walter Mondale of between 65 and 69 percent. Jews in heavily Jewish precincts may have been a little bit more likely to vote for Reagan than other Jews, but only a little. In CBS News's New York State exit poll, there were six precincts in which Jews cast between 50 and 75 percent of the votes. In three of them (Great Neck, Gravesend, and Midwood), Mr. Reagan won 55, 49, and 44 percent of the votes cast by Jews. But in the other three (Brooklyn Heights, Manhattan's East 50s and another part of Midwood), he got just 13, 21, and 28 percent respectively. In these six precincts, Jews gave Mr. Reagan 36 percent of their votes. All other Jews in that New York poll gave Mr. Reagan 29 percent of their votes.

ADAM CLYMER
WARREN MITOFSKY
CBS News/New York Times Poll
New York, New York

Socialist TV

To the editors:
Michael Harrington's suggestions ("A Socialist's Centennial," TNR, January 7 & 14) for "democratizing communication and information" would foreseeably create and subsidize new cadres of bureaucrats and "experts"; it is most unlikely that they would come from the bottom ranks of society. If the depressingly familiar historical scenario were reenacted, they would be members of educated elites convinced that they can discern and represent the interests of the exploited masses, not the masses themselves. How, precisely, would "banning private, paid political television time" and "empowering unemployed steelworkers [to] hire experts and buy computer time [to] come up with a counterplan for their industry and region" open up "new lines of communication . . . from the bottom to the top"? Who will decide which candidates are "serious" enough to qualify for taxpayer-funded TV and radio time?

MARY M. ASH
Stanford, California

The editors welcome correspondence from readers. Letters should include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be held to under 200 words. Letters may be edited for space. Please address letters to: Correspondence, TNR, 1220 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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the exclusionary rule for wrongly obtained evidence, permit other important social policies such as controlling the police to override the question of guilt. The interplay between these special factors often overwhelms the basic question: did he do it?

On the other hand, as these four case histories show, almost no one gets a real trial anymore, with the full panoply of legal rights and proof of guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. Well over 90 percent of all criminal cases are disposed of by plea bargaining. The prosecutor, the defense lawyer, and sometimes the judge, assess the likelihood of conviction and make a deal. You accept their deal under threat of worse punishment if you assert your right to a full trial. In effect, crime and punishment are determined by a rough calculation of the *probability* of guilt, with the constitutional protections factored into the deal. Weak evidence may knock a few years off a sentence, for example, or a potential Miranda-warning issue may turn a felony into a misdemeanor.

A dazzling article five years ago in *The Public Interest*, by Professor John Langbein of the University of Chicago Law School, compared plea bargaining to the system of legal torture in medieval Europe. Torture arose not because standards of justice were low, but because they were too high. Conviction for a crime required either a confession or the testimony of two unimpeachable eyewitnesses. Since the latter was rarely available, procedures arose for inducing the former. Bargaining to induce guilty pleas has arisen similarly as a way to avoid the impossible cost and likely failure of conviction at trial.

The people who call for more police often call as well for longer jail sentences. This also misses the point. American criminal sentences are already quite long, and nobody wants to spend the money to build more prisons (especially in their own neighborhood). Judging from the records of Bernhard Goetz's four victims, what seems to be lacking is any sense that justice will be certain or swift. The certainty that arrest will produce a year in jail, starting next week, would have a more sobering effect on young punks than the idea that they're playing roulette for a possible five-to-ten in the hazy future. But that certainty is exactly what our present criminal justice system cannot provide.

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Second Thoughts

AS AN EXTREMIST of the center, I often take what seems even to me to be an excessive amount of time making up my mind about political issues. I am frequently torn between the conviction that life in America is pretty good and the educated guess that it could be a lot better. My friends on the right kindly refrain from saying that I lack the will essential for the defense of the free world; my friends on the left raise questions about my commitment to revolutionary transformation. I plead nolo contendere on both counts.

A CASE IN POINT. In November I noted in these pages that the Reagan administration was ignoring Arturo Cruz, the former member of the Sandinista junta in Nicaragua who is now a leader of the democratic opposition in that country. The Reagan administration, I suggested, had exploited Cruz's democratic reputation to discredit the Sandinistas' November elections. With the elections out of the way, the Reagan administration no longer even paid lip service to Cruz and instead devoted itself to its longtime favorites, officers of the old Somoza dictatorship who lead the armed opposition, the contras. I called for U.S. support of the position Cruz had outlined in a press conference only days before: cut off aid to the contras, give Sandinista President Daniel Ortega a "period of grace," and explore further negotiations. Oops. Two weeks later Cruz changed his mind on the Op-Ed page of *The New York Times*. He wrote that he had "badly underestimated" the repressive inclinations of the Sandinistas and said he now opposes cutting off the contras' aid. Did I support Cruz or did I support his (former) policy? In a mercifully unpublished letter to the editor, James Roberts Jr., a thoughtful TNR reader from Houston, pummeled me on my exposed dilemma. Nothing like a little public embarrassment to clear the desk and clarify the mind, and I dashed off a brief note to Roberts. But the more I've thought about my answer, the more I've decided it was wholly unsatisfactory. So what do I think, James? I'm sorry to say that I think Cruz is wrong. The question of whether continued Sandinista rule or a full-scale civil war is more likely to produce a pluralist and democratic Nicaragua has become painfully irrelevant. A successful counterrevolution will result in thousands of deaths followed by a Pinochet-style dictatorship for a decade or two or three. The Sandinistas are repressive and intermittently vicious, but they haven't done anything yet to justify sentencing the Nicaraguan people to that.

AN UNDECIDED EDITOR has it easy compared to an undecided Indian. The Guatemalan army, *New York Times* correspondent James LeMoyne reported last week, "is building 74 so-called model villages to relocate Indian refugees, most of whose homes were burned by Guatemalan soldiers two years ago in an effort to persuade the Indians to stop supporting the rebels." In 1983, our assistant secretary of state for human rights, the ever-vigilant Elliott Abrams, described the army's burning of Indian villages with an impressive combination of scientific detachment and hallucinogenic reasoning. "The number of refugees and displaced persons increased with some communities and individuals seeking the army's protection," he wrote in the State Department's annual report on human rights. If I burned down Elliott Abrams's house in an effort to persuade him that he needs my "protection," he might view the charred ruins with less equanimity, and he might describe the episode without suggesting that I'd done him a favor.

ABOUT THESE RIGHT-WING friends of mine: they can be engagingly naive. I had lunch with a squadron of them last weekend, and one of them (whom I had only just met) remarked with surprise, "Hey, this guy doesn't dress like a liberal." The West Virginia U. baseball cap throws them every time. To which the friend who is guilty of introducing me to this crowd replied, "That's because we all dress like liberals these days." He's right, of course. In my penetration of right-wing circles, I have noticed that the cultural innovations of the despised 1960s are staples in the young lives of young neoconservative men and women: a serious interest in rock music, a serious interest in premarital sex, gay friends, tolerance for abortion, fondness of yogurt. The list is so scandalous I won't finish it. Do neoconservative fathers hit the roof when their daughters move in with their boyfriends? I suspect not. I urge this neoconservative generation to show more public respect for the traditions that have been handed down to them.

MICHAEL GRAHAM, a star player on Georgetown University's 1984 national championship basketball team, has quit the team. If you'd looked up the term "power forward" in the dictionary last year, you would've found Graham's picture in the margin. He liked nothing better than to sail toward the hoop through a forest of defenders and deliver a crushing erase-your-face slam dunk. As he jogged back up the court, the opposing team would listlessly retrieve the bouncing ball and resume play as if there were nothing behind their eyeballs but lemon Jell-O. I thought coach John Thompson let Graham's elbows get hyperactive too often, but he didn't indulge Graham's academic laziness. Before this season he kicked Graham off the team for a year. At first Graham said he would stay in school and catch up on his classwork. But last week he decided to transfer to the University of the District of Columbia, a local school without Georgetown's high academic standards. "There's always somebody who will take you in and keep you eligible," Coach Thompson sighed. Graham's future is now indistinguishable from that of most college basketball players, especially black ones. He's unlikely to hit the 10,000-to-one shot and make the NBA, he's certainly not going to get a degree from one of the country's most respected universities, and he's not likely to get a degree at all. Coincidentally, UDC also announced last week that it planned to loosen the academic requirements for all students that it had tightened just last year. Graham's only excuse for ignoring his studies is his youth. That's not much of an excuse for a 21-year-old, but it's more than the people who run UDC have.

J.M.

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